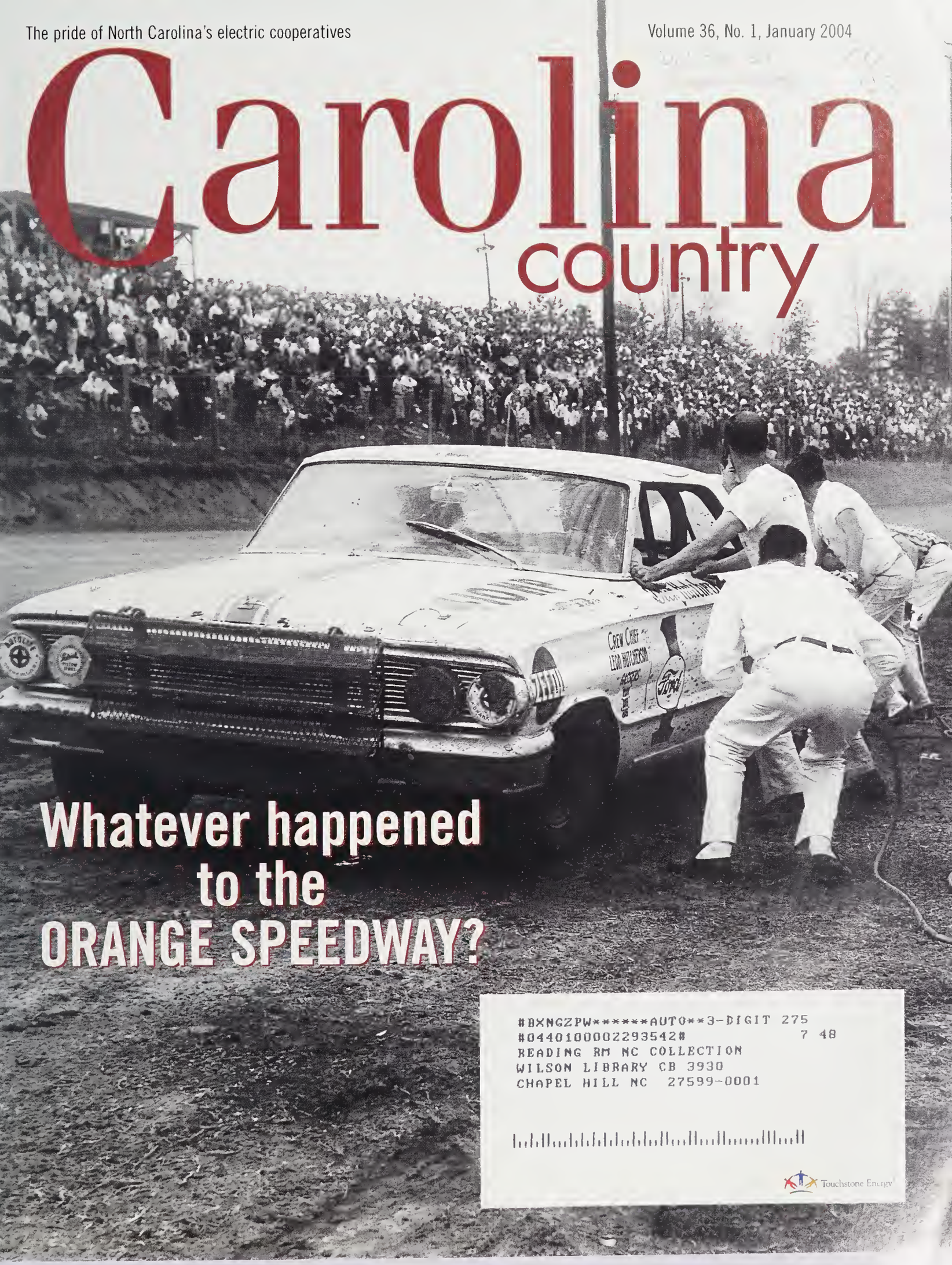
The pride of North Carolina's electric cooperatives

Volume 36, No. 1, January 2004

Carolina country



Whatever happened to the ORANGE SPEEDWAY?

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Touchstone Energy

How to find the real Cold Mountain — page 10

How young do you want to feel?

Secret ice cream ingredient may reduce LDL cholesterol by a whopping 26%!

Eat to ease your pain!

"Grape Juice is an Artery-Clearing Wonder!"

(By Frank K. Wood)

If you'd like to prevent — and even help defeat — many common ailments, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and arthritis with delicious foods you already love to eat, you need *"Unleash the Inner Healing Power of Foods,"* an informative new book just released to the public by FC&A Publishing in Peachtree City, Georgia.

Find out which foods are loaded with the vitamins, minerals, and nutrients that scientists say prevent aging and disease — foods like olive oil (helps prevent wrinkles and lowers blood pressure), green tea (eases ulcer pain and strengthens bones) ... even garlic (enhances memory and helps prevent strokes). Get this book and start eating you way to better health today!

The authors provide many health tips with full explanations.

- ▶ This delicious, vitamin-packed fruit is proven to relieve arthritis pain even better than aspirin, ibuprofen and other drugs — with no stomach upset or other side effects.
- ▶ Just two servings of this each week will bolster your body against heart attack, stroke, type 2 diabetes, depression, and cancer!
- ▶ Lose weight, reduce stress, and even treat type 2 diabetes with this amazing remedy.
- ▶ Keep artery walls clean and prevent blood clots with these scrumptious foods.
- ▶ The tiny, sweet fruit that contains over 17 compounds to clear away artery-clogging plaque far better than vitamin supplements!
- ▶ Studies show that people who take this vitamin daily significantly reduced their risk of suffering a heart attack or stroke. (This same vitamin was also proven to heal stroke damage, too.)
- ▶ Memory slipping? Don't skip breakfast! Plus, more memory-boosting tips.
- ▶ Secret cause of tiredness or muscle cramps — and the foods that can cure you.
- ▶ You may not have to worry about being overweight again! The "Nothing Forbidden" diet plan anybody can follow!
- ▶ Tired all the time? Put the spring back in your step with this nutrient.
- ▶ Find out why flu shots don't always protect you from infection — and discover a marvelous fruit that wards off the flu naturally!
- ▶ A vitamin that neutralizes toxic chemicals that cause hardening of the arteries.
- ▶ Stave off memory loss when you include this in your diet! Even a modest amount can keep your brain super charged!
- ▶ Cholesterol: Natural ways to bring it down and keep it down, from carrots to chocolate!
- ▶ Can slash your risk of cancer, halt heart disease, improve your energy level, relieve arthritis, prevent cataracts, and much more. All these fabulous benefits from just one vitamin!
- ▶ Want easy answers to life's biggest health questions? Doctors have found that eating foods rich in just two basic vitamins reduces your risk of death from many causes. This book names the two vitamins on and their best sources.
- ▶ Eat your way to lower blood pressure! Get the latest word on what you should and shouldn't eat.
- ▶ Four foods that contain a natural antihistamine that can help open your stuffy nose without drugs.
- ▶ The top 10 healing herbs: It's one secret your pharmacist can't afford to tell you!
- ▶ Wow! This inexpensive, ultra low-calorie vegetable has ultra high cancer-fighting nutrients. Researchers say it prevents cancer of the colon, brain, breast, stomach, bladder and lung!
- ▶ Painful joints? You may find real pain relief naturally just by balancing these two nutrients found in eggs, meat, milk, and fish.
- ▶ Eat to end your pain! Discover these 12 pain-fighting foods that work with your body to ease inflammation and repair damaged joints.
- ▶ Eat health-friendly foods like tomatoes, grapes, strawberries, and sweet potatoes to get a variety of nutrients that even the most complete multi-vitamin just can't match!
- ▶ Hypertension? This spice lowers blood pressure and cholesterol.
- ▶ The amazing bread that works exactly like cholesterol-lowering drugs but without the side effects.
- ▶ Natural healing alternatives that don't require drugs, doctors, or lab tests.
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- ▶ Increase blood flow to the brain and help slow the progression of Alzheimer's when you add this to your diet.
- ▶ Reduce your chance of having a stroke by up to 40%, simply by getting more of the natural mineral.
- ▶ Drop blood pressure like a rock with this trio of minerals.
- ▶ A common, inexpensive high-pectin fruit can lower your cholesterol by up to 30% if you eat it every day. Pectin is a remarkable soluble fiber you need to know more about.
- ▶ The more they ate, the more their cholesterol came down. What is this powerful healing food?
- ▶ Protect yourself from Alzheimer's with this natural substance.
- ▶ If you drink water only when you're thirsty, you're not drinking enough! How to keep your body's machinery running in tip-top condition — just by drinking the right amount of water!
- ▶ Fight the triple threat of heart disease with Omega-3 fatty acids. They clear clogged arteries, lubricate clumping blood cells, and ease high blood pressure. Discover the best sources of this amazing nutrient.
- ▶ Instant way to keep your arteries free of clogging plaque. Just whip this up in your smoothies.
- ▶ Is this the last diet plan you'll ever need? In less than one month, women and men on this delicious and nutritious plan lost weight without dieting, reduced their cholesterol 21%, improved their sense of well being, felt less anxiety, fear, and depression, reduced chest pain by 91%, felt renewed energy and required much less sleep!
- ▶ Raise your metabolism and drop pounds with this nutritional supplement.
- ▶ American Heart Association says you can enjoy several eggs a week regardless of your cholesterol. How many? Find out in the book.
- ▶ Maintain your razor-sharp memory by eating the right foods!
- ▶ 10 healing herbs that work. Hyped-up herbs that don't.
- ▶ Folks over 55 have two reasons to take this potent vitamin. It strengthens muscles and immunity.
- ▶ Another powerful herb that single-handedly rids your body of the toxins that cause hardening of the arteries.

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North Carolina's electric cooperatives provide reliable, safe and affordable electric service to 850,000 homes, farms and businesses in North Carolina. The 27 electric cooperatives are each member-owned, not-for-profit and overseen by a board of directors elected by the membership.

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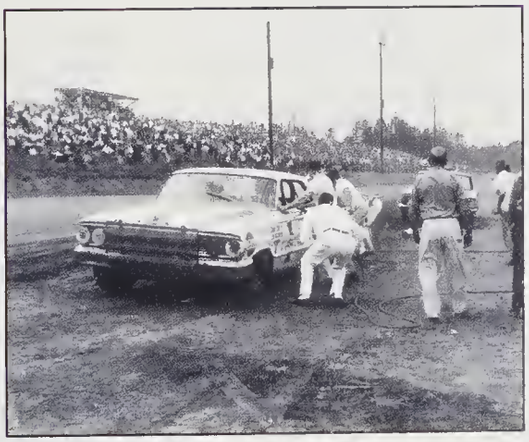

On the Cover

Leon Hutcherson was pit crew chief for Dick Hutcherson's 1964 Ford Fairlane 500 Hardtop shown here at the Orange Speedway. See what's become of the speedway today on pages 16-17. (Photo courtesy of Classical American Homes Preservation Trust)

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Ron Clark's passion

By Michael E.C. Gery, editor

The excerpt from Ron Clark's book that we published in November really hit a chord, especially among teachers, but also among parents of school-age children. Ron Clark is the former Beaufort County teacher who was Disney Teacher of the Year in 2000 and author of the bestseller, "The Essential 55: Rules for Discovering the Successful Student in Every Child."

Some Carolina Country readers were disappointed that they couldn't see Ron Clark when he spoke at three awards ceremonies here in North Carolina during November. They were ceremonies given in honor of teachers across the state who received 2003-2004 Bright Ideas grants from North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives. Mr. Clark appeared in Charlotte, Raleigh and Greenville, and after each event, those who attended, including me in Greenville, came away amazed.

For the benefit of those who couldn't attend, I can try to give you an idea of what it's like.

The guy has more energy that anyone you might know who's older than 10. When asked after his talk where he gets the energy, he said, "Pepsi." He covers the entire room, and given an opportunity will jump onto a table to make a few points. His face lights up like bright ideas are popping into his head continually . He can contort himself or strike a pose like the comic actor Martin Short better than anyone I've seen. Invited to speak to a group of second-graders in Illinois recently, he was somewhat worried than an audience so young would not know or care who he is. But when they introduced him as a guy from North Carolina, the kids erupted. He found out later that the kids thought he was Clay Aiken of "American Idol."

He spoke to students in Japan and was impressed by how much geography they knew, and since then, he presses all teachers to introduce geography into whatever they teach. "These Japanese students knew North Carolina geography!" he said. "They asked me, 'Are you from Raleigh?' Imagine that! I said, 'No.' So they said, "Are you from Charlotte?' I told them no and said, "I'm in Belhaven! Y'all know where *that* is?""

Donna Bise

Ron Clark at the Charlotte Bright Ideas awards ceremony

As he meets people across the country, he has learned that North Carolina has a good reputation for its public education programs. "It's nice to be a teacher from North Carolina. Other teachers think we are leaders in education. And we are making strides. I am proud to be from here."

Then he points out where we can make even greater strides: ease up on the burdens placed on new teachers, allow senior teachers to mentor junior ones, dress and act professionally and respectably all the time, encourage all students to conceive of college in their future, offer to help students who are bullied by others, transfer your passion to students, stay in touch with them after they leave your class and your school.

He told a story about teaching travel studies to fifth graders at Snowden Elementary School in Aurora, Beaufort County, and they decided to try to take a field trip to New York City. He wanted them to see "Phantom of the Opera" on Broadway. But instead of going for the $10 seats in the back of the theater, they became motivated to get the $75 seats. "I can't tell you how many Saturday mornings we spent sitting in front of the Piggly Wiggly selling Krispy Kreme doughnuts," he said, "but when we got into that theater all 60 of those 10- and 11-year-olds marched right down to the first row." And they paid attention during the entire performance.

Ron Clark mentioned the help and inspiration he received from the North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program and from Barbara Jones, a math and science teacher at Aurora Middle School, who taught with him and saw him at the Greenville luncheon in November. (She received a Bright Ideas grant from Tideland EMC). In fact, Barbara Jones and some of their former students (now at Southside High School in Beaufort County) plan to accompany him to South Africa this year to deliver school supplies in Soweto.

One of his missions these days is to start a school in New York City for disadvantaged children. He's going to start with 100 fifth graders. As a fifth-grade teacher in one of Harlem's toughest schools, he managed after one year to motivate 12 of his students to apply and be accepted at the city's most elite school for high achievers. As one of his Harlem students, Tamera, says in a video about Ron Clark, "He made me want to be somebody." She also says, "He taught us some things, and we taught him some things." And the night before he was to speak to the teachers in Greenville, Ron Clark spoke with Tamera in New York City by telephone from Belhaven.

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Every teacher is my "teacher of the year"

Thank you for the wonderful article about Ron Clark and the great success that has accompanied his style of working with children in the public schools in North Carolina and other places, such as the challenge of taking on that job in the inner city schools.

This story is one of many thousands that take place every day around our great country, and you never hear a thing about all those successes and awards that go home in some teacher's heart.

My hope is that teachers like Ron stay in the classroom where they can make a difference. You see so many young and dedicated teachers end up as supervisors and central office personnel, speakers and public relations professionals because of their aggressive nature and success in the classroom. This is where our education system is hurting itself.

I stayed in the classroom for 32 and a half years. I am a retired teacher and coach (Randolph County for 10 years and Chatham County for 22, and had the pleasure of teaching all three of the wonderful kids of Randolph EMC's general manager Dale Lambert at Bennett School, one of the greatest schools on the face anywhere). Keep these teachers in the classrooms, and move those with less success in the classroom into administration.

I would like to read an article every issue about something a teacher is doing with his or her kids at school, not only in your magazine but in every newspaper and every magazine. Maybe eventually people will began to appreciate what all the teachers are trying to do every day in every classroom around this still great country of ours. Every teacher is my "teacher of the year," and we all need to let them know first by supporting them and then by paying them.

Ira McGee
Ramseur
Randolph EMC

This old house

This house is located in Nash County not far from Middlesex. It was built prior to 1800 and was last occupied around World War II. Note how the boards were installed vertically. This type of construction is very old.

John DiGilio
Zebulon

Looking for a song

We are looking for the words and music to "Purple Scarlet Robe." Or it may be "Scarlet Purple Robe." Not sure which, but it's the same song. If anyone can help us find it, we would appreciate it very much.

Leroy Baity
3505 Snoopy Lane
Yadkinville, NC 27055

Really big car

This is a picture of my boyfriend, John R. Chappell, at Myrtle Beach. He dearly loves big cars. This is the biggest one yet.

Dora Adams
Lancaster, S.C.

Sterile ground of a turpentine distillery

We had an area on our farm like that described on page 37 in Carolina Country's October 2003 issue [the sterile Devil's Tramping Ground in southwest Chatham County, "Tar Heel Lessons"]. It turned out to be the site of an old turpentine distillery.

While trenching in a drainage line, our trencher hit a large bathtub-shaped vat made of pine resin. The vat was about two and a half inches thick. In the past, to make one of these turpentine distilleries, they would make a concave circle in the ground and dig a small ditch from the center to the outside of the circle. They dug a large oval vat pit at the end of the ditch. They placed cut pine trees on end, leaning against each other, from the inside of the circle out. They covered the pile with dirt, except the center on top and at the entrance to the ditch. Then they started a fire at the center of the pile. When fire got to the correct size, the hole on top was covered, and the person monitoring the distilling would put holes in the dirt cover or cover them as needed. The heat sweated the turpentine out of the logs, which drained down the ditch into the vat hole. They dipped it out and placed it in barrels to be transported to Wilmington by way of raft or dugout canoe via South Black River, now known as South River. The turpentine sterilized the ground.

Jim Simon
Autryville
South River EMC

Breaking ground for the new Fort Bragg Operations Center, are (from left) ; Ronnie Hunt of Lumbee River EMC, Jerry Hartgrove of Sandhills Utility Services, Col. Gregory Bean of Fort Bragg, Donnie Spivey of Pee Dee EMC, Morris McClelion of Central EMC and Buddy Creed of South River EMC.

Sandhills Utility Services sets up shop at Fort Bragg - Pope AFB

The four Touchstone Energy cooperatives that formed Sandhills Utility Services to serve Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force base are building a facility to house administration offices, engineering, operations, linemen quarters and warehousing. SUS will handle electric distribution service to the housing, office buildings, hospital, commissary, storage buildings, hangars and all other facilities of Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base.

SUS was formed by Central EMC, Lumbee River EMC, Pee Dee EMC and South River EMC and was awarded the contract earlier this year to serve the military facility.

The 6,000-square-foot structure, officially named the Fort Bragg Operations Center, will be located at the northeast corner of Butner and Riley streets, a location that allows easy access to the operation center for SUS employees and military personnel. Barnhill Contracting Co. of Raleigh said the building should be completed by mid-summer.

Jerry Hartgrove, Fort Bragg facilities manager and general manager of Sandhills Utility Services, said at the groundbreaking ceremony, "We have put a lot of hard work into making this partnership a reality. We look forward to a long relationship with Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. We take great pride in serving these facilities just as much as we take pride in our troops who preserve our nation."

Colonel Gregory Bean, director of the Public Works Business Center in Fort Bragg, spoke about the cooperation between SUS and the Public Works Business Center. "Cooperatives are a part of my team," he said. "One of the hardest things for a soldier to do is give up control, but I couldn't ask for a better partner."

Curtis Wynn recognized for rural development leadership

Curtis Wynn

Curtis Wynn, CEO of Roanoke Electric Cooperative, recently was recognized for his accomplishments in rural development.

Wynn received the Outstanding Rural Leadership Award presented each year by The Rural Center and its alumni organization of the center's leadership development program, the Rural Economic Development Organization. The award recognizes individuals who have helped make significant improvements to life in their rural North Carolina region. Past award recipients include Assistant Secretary of Commerce Cleveland Simpson; Dr. James Owen, president of Piedmont Community College; Judy Stevens, director of the Montgomery Economic Development Corporation; Ann Woodford, founder of One Dozen Who Care; Pat Brinkley, president of the Western North Carolina Development Association; Roger Sheats, deputy secretary of the Department of Transportation; and Bob Shepherd, former executive director of the Land-of-Sky Regional Council.

Wynn serves also as president of the North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation board of directors, the power supply cooperative for the state's Touchstone Energy cooperatives. He also serves on the executive board of the Rural Center and as a member of the Rural Internet Access Authority. He was nominated for this award because of his efforts to support economic and community revitalization in northeastern North Carolina.

In 2000, under Wynn's leadership, Roanoke Electric Cooperative created an Economic Development and Grant Services department and formed a nonprofit subsidiary to assist in financing small businesses. To date, these programs have helped secure $4 million in loans and grants for businesses in its five-county service area. Under his leadership, the cooperative became the founding agency of the Roanoke Chowan Partners for Progress to support grassroots community development. The partnership has received national recognition from the National Association of Development Organizations and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Task force finds many causes of the Aug. 14 blackout

The United States-Canada Power Outage Task Force in November issued an interim report of the causes of the Aug. 14 blackout that affected the northeastern U.S., Michigan, Ohio and Canada.

The report finds that the blackout was initiated in Ohio where three high-voltage transmission lines short circuited when they came into contact with trees. A string of complications then caused a cascade of power failures. The report identifies factors such as poor communications, human error, mechanical breakdowns, inadequate training, software glitches, and insufficient attention to things ranging from the performance of sophisticated computer modeling systems to simple tree trimming as contributing to the conditions that led to the blackout.

The interim report focuses on the events, actions, failures and conditions that led to the blackout and allowed it to cascade over a large portion of the Northeast. It also focuses on questions relating to nuclear power operations during the blackout and the security of the grid itself and the control systems that make it work.

The release of the report marks the conclusion of the first phase of the task force's investigation. In coming months, the task force will hold a series of public forums in the affected areas of both countries. At the forums, the public will have the opportunity to comment on the report's findings and present ideas to improve the reliability of the electricity infrastructure. After this process, the group will issue a final report of recommendations for improving the electric system and for any follow-up.

U.S. Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham and Canadian Minister of Natural Resources Herb Dhaliwal, who co-chair the task force, issued the interim report in Washington on Nov. 19.

Senate leader pledges to push for a national energy bill this winter

The U.S. House of Representatives and Senate negotiated a compromise on national energy legislation in November, and even though the House passed the bill Nov. 18 it stalled in the Senate the following week. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, Republican of Tennessee, said at the time he intended to make the compromise legislation the first priority when Congress returns in January.

Cooperatives supported the bill as finally crafted by Sen. Pete Domenici, Republican of New Mexico. Among other provisions, it would have preserved the ability of electric co-ops to govern themselves on behalf of their consumers.

Here are some of the other provisions that electric cooperatives supported. As approved by the House, the bill:

- Minimized new Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) burdens for cooperatives.
- Protected the reliability of the bulk transmission system and minimizes other new regulatory burdens on cooperatives.
- Created a single, national industry-based reliability organization with the authority – subject to FERC oversight – to establish and enforce national reliability standards.
- Ensured that utilities that rely on bulk power transmission will get the same access and benefits of the systems as the owners of the transmission systems.
- Included several provisions to protect consumers and prevent some market abuses, such as prohibiting manipulation of data relating to the price of wholesale electricity or the availability of transmission, permitting federal rules protecting electric consumers against unintentional switching of their power provider, and improper disclosure of consumer information.

Touchstone Energy photo winner

This photograph by Lora Kempka was the first-place winner in the photography contest at the Touchstone Energy Cotton Festival held each year in Dunn the first Saturday in November. Lora Kempka, 35, who lives in Dunn and works at Caterpillar in Clayton, received the $500 first prize. The winners of the Touchstone Energy Cotton Festival Photography Contest took home $1,000 in prizes.

Central supply co-op moves into new warehouse complex

The supply cooperative of North Carolina's electric cooperatives, The Tarheel Electric Membership Association, prepared to move into its new facility in late December. The new headquarters and warehouse complex is located in Raleigh near Interstate 540 and US-1 North.

The $4.5 million, 130,000-square-foot complex will provide some welcome elbow room for TEMA's 17-person staff. TEMA had occupied its former office and warehouse complex in Raleigh since 1976.

The 540 Business Park complex will continue TEMA's tradition and role as the material staging area for electric cooperative crews and suppliers when severe weather, such as hurricanes and ice storms, hit the state.

TEMA was formed in 1975 to combine the purchasing power of the state's 27 electric cooperatives and is governed by a board of cooperative managers and board members. Even though the state's electric cooperatives are not required to purchase electric supplies, such as poles, wire and transformers, from TEMA, it provides approximately 80 percent of the electric cooperatives' material needs. Usually the type of material TEMA does not provide is specialized, cooperative brand-specific equipment.

How can you see the real COLD MOUNTAIN?

Asheville Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Milepost 411 overlook on the Blue Ridge Parkway south of Asheville offers one view of Cold Mountain.

Where is Cold Mountain, North Carolina? It became well-known with Charles Frazier's best-selling Civil War-era novel. Now the mountain will receive more fame with the Christmas opening of "Cold Mountain," one of the most anticipated motion pictures of the year. Since Cold Mountain is part of an undeveloped wilderness area near Asheville, it receives few visitors each year. However, its distinctive profile can be admired from several locations.

Directed by Academy Award-winner Anthony Minghella ("The English Patient," "The Talented Mr. Ripley") and based on Frazier's novel, "Cold Mountain" tells the story of Inman (Jude Law), a wounded confederate soldier who is on a perilous journey home to his mountain community, hoping to reunite with his pre-war sweetheart, Ada (Nicole Kidman). In his absence, Ada struggles to survive and revive her father's farm with the help of intrepid young drifter Ruby (Renee Zellweger).

The movie was not filmed near Cold Mountain. It was filmed mostly in Romania.

Author Charles Frazier found inspiration for what he calls his "American odyssey" in the mountainous backwoods near Asheville and in the area's local history and unique culture. "Whenever I'm back in those mountains, I feel like that's home, no matter how long I've been away," says Frazier, whose family has lived in the hills of North Carolina for over 200 years.

Cold Mountain is located in the Haywood EMC service area 40 miles from Asheville and is part of the Shining Rock Wilderness Area in Pisgah National Forest. Since Cold Mountain is government-owned, it is still in its natural state (much as it was during the Civil War) and requires a strenuous 10-mile hike to reach the 6,030-foot summit. However, you can enjoy views of the mountain via the Blue Ridge Parkway or a shorter hike to the top of Mount Pisgah.

The easiest place to see the actual Cold Mountain is along the Blue Ridge Parkway just past Wagon Road Gap (mentioned in the book). From Asheville, drive south along the Parkway past Mt. Pisgah to milepost 411. There visitors will find a large, weathered, wooden National Park Service sign, not unlike those found at all of the other Parkway overlooks. The exception is that this spot is now easily one of the more photographed along the Blue Ridge Parkway, with visitors strategically placing themselves next to the sign with the now-famous mountain looming in the distance.

There is no town of Cold Mountain. A few small hamlets at various points along the base of the mountain might well have been the inspiration for the fictionalized town. From the Parkway, a drive south along U.S. 276 leads to the base of the mountain and Cruso, a small settlement along the East Fork of the Pigeon River. A little farther north, at Bethel, the road intersects with State Road 215 which heads south, providing views of the west side of the mountain and passing by scenic Lake Logan, the Sunburst Trout Farm and a roadside swimming hole and picnic area, before eventually reconnecting to the Parkway.

A more extensive view of Cold Mountain is enjoyed from the top of Mount Pisgah (5,700 feet), located at Milepost 407 on the Blue Ridge Parkway, 26 miles southwest of Asheville. A three-mile roundtrip trail takes you to the top for a grand view of Cold Mountain.

You should probably wait until spring to enjoy either view, since this section of the Blue Ridge Parkway may be closed for most of the winter. To check on closures call (828) 298-0398 or go to the Web site www.nps.gov/blri/closure.htm

For photographs of Cold Mountain and detailed information about hiking to its summit, go to www.RomanticAsheville.com or www.exploreasheville.com

Get in the zone with the mattress topper that molds to your body's contours

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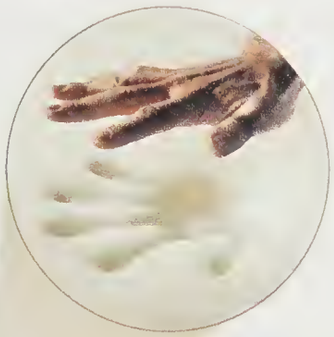

The 2-inch thick temperature-smart foam adjusts to your shape.

It's 3 a.m. You have exactly two hours until you have to get up for work, and you still can't seem to fall asleep. At this point, the phrase "tossing and turning" begins to take on a whole new meaning for people whose mattresses simply aren't giving proper support anymore. Your mattress may dictate your quality of sleep. Even if you merely suspect that your mattress may be outdated, that's when you need to take action. Some mattresses fail to support your spine properly, which can result in increased pressure on certain parts of your body. Other mattresses, sporting certain degrees of visco-elastic foam, can sometimes cost you well over $1000. Now, one of the world's leading manufacturers of foam products has developed an incredibly affordable mattress topper that can actually change the way you sleep. Introducing the future of a better night's sleep: The Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper.

Wake up to a better morning. The Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper is designed to give you a better sleep surface. Not only does it support each region of your body, but it's also temperature sensitive. With its various-sized "comfort cells," the 2-inch thick Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper combines six zones to support specific body area weight, which promotes a better night's sleep. The largest cells support your lower back and midsection, while the medium-sized cells support the shoulders, lower back and legs. The smallest cells support your head and feet. Combined, these zones provide variable support from head to toe. By using visco-elastic foam, the Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper also molds to your body contours to help prevent tossing and turning during the night. When you lie down on this amazing material, the heat and pressure sensitive foam reacts to your body's weight and temperature, so that it molds to your exact body shape. This means that whether you sleep on your back, stomach or side, your weight is evenly distributed and your spine remains in a neutral position. Other surfaces support your body at the shoulders, hips and legs only. This causes your spine to sag in other areas, which can often result in discomfort, and even back pain. You'll wake up rested, relaxed and ready to take on the day. Anyone who suffers from insomnia and back pain due to mattress discomfort can benefit from this technology.

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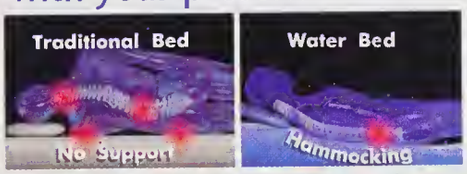

The ideal position is a neutral body posture in which the different parts of the human body are supported individually and evenly. This is the secret behind Memory Foam Ultra, the mattress topper that turns any bed into the ideal sleep surface.

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Try it for yourself today! The Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper can change the way you sleep. Promote proper spine positioning, while enjoying relief from insomnia and back pain with this full-body support. It comes with a 5-year manufacturer's limited warranty and TechnoScout's exclusive in-home trial. If you are not completely satisfied, simply return it within 30 days for the full purchase price.

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State study examines feasibility of BURYING power lines

The North Carolina Utilities Commission (NCUC) issued a report in November that recommends against burying utility lines throughout existing utility distribution systems, because the financial and environmental costs would be too great. The commission did suggest, however, that electric utilities continue their practice of burying lines when feasible, including in newly developed areas as well as when the cost to do so can be paid or shared by the party requesting burial or by a third party.

Responding to public requests, the NCUC's Public Staff conducted an investigation into burying power and other utility lines after the December 2002 ice storm wreaked havoc throughout central North Carolina, especially in urban areas. The investigation studied the systems owned by the state's investor-owned electric utilities (Duke Power, Progress Energy Carolinas and Dominion North Carolina Power), but the findings pertain to consumer-owned electric cooperatives and municipal systems as well.

The study concludes that consumers would end up paying considerably higher utility bills, plus the cost of connecting electric service to their residences or places of business. Referring to the investor-owned utilities alone, the NCUC said "Such an undertaking would cost approximately $41 billion, nearly six times the net book value of the utilities' current distribution assets, and would require approximately 25 years to complete. The ultimate impact of the capital costs alone on an average residential customer's monthly electric bill would be an increase of more than 125 percent."

Maintaining underground lines, when required, is more expensive than maintaining overhead lines, the report says.

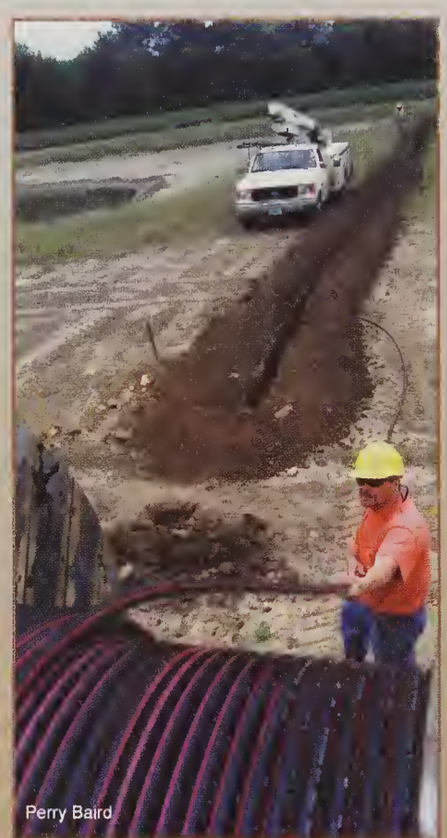
It calculated that the average residential customer would see a monthly increase of about $2.34 for using 1,000 kilowatt-hours for each $1 billion spent on the conversion.

"Customer service drops would have to be buried," the report says, "which requires trenching in residential yards and commercial properties that can cause disruption of existing landscapes. Burying power lines requires digging large ditches that could harm existing landscapes. If trenching were to take place near existing trees, there is the possibility that root systems of nearby trees would be damaged and this could eventually weaken or kill the trees in or near the right-of-way."

Regarding the additional cost to connect underground service to individual buildings, the report says, "Customers would be required to hire licensed electricians to modify their service entrances. The cost of this service would depend on the specifics of each property, but a rough estimate would be around $400 per residential and small commercial customer. In addition, there may be additional costs if dwellings do not meet current electrical codes, as is often the case with older dwellings. The local municipality may require the property owner to make modifications to bring the dwelling to current code before underground electric service would be permitted."

Each individual service drop would have to be buried as well. These are lines that typically run from the pole to the building. The NCUC estimates the cost to convert overhead to underground service drop would be $2,350 for a 250-foot rural drop.

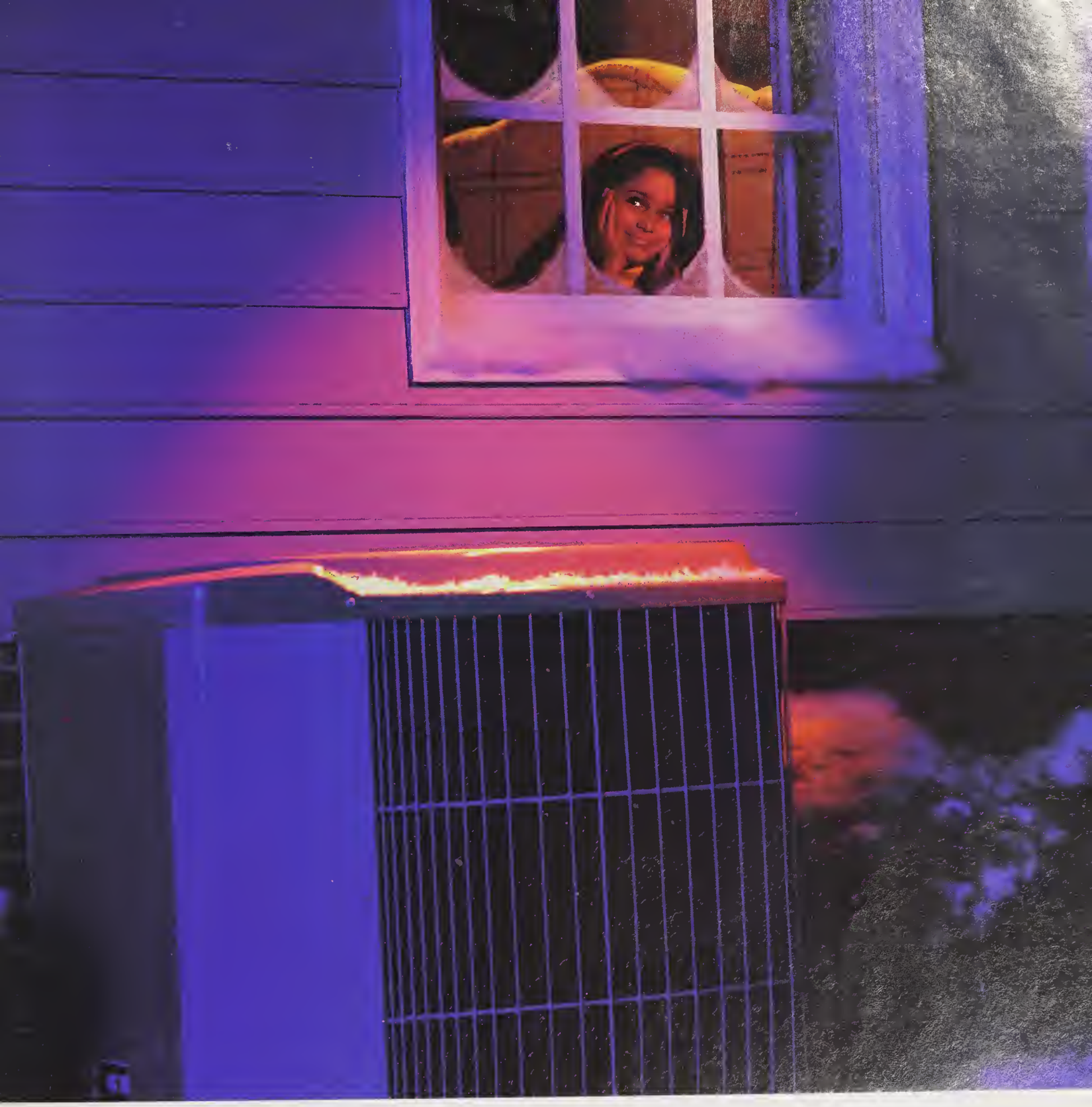
The study concluded that underground lines deliver power more reliably in normal weather conditions and perform better during storms. Overall, underground service experiences about half the interruptions as overhead service. But the report notes that "This gain in reliability, however, is offset by a 58 percent increase in repair time, as underground faults require specialized repair crews to locate the faults, dig up the area around the fault, and repair the cable. In most cases, such an effort requires different crews and scheduling. During severe weather events, such as hurricanes and ice storms, customers with underground facilities are less likely to be interrupted but will be among the last to have power restored when there is an underground fault."


Perry Baird

Electric utilities, including cooperatives, follow plans to bury lines when conditions warrant it, such as in newly developed housing projects where the disruption and cost are minimal compared to wholesale conversion of overhead systems. In addition, utilities will bury lines when the requesting party pays the additional cost, or when a government agency contributes to the cost. For example, Brunswick Electric, the cooperative serving Brunswick and Columbus counties, is participating in a federal government cost-sharing program to bury service cable. The co-op qualified for the program because of the extent of damage caused by two seasons of hurricanes slamming that area of the coast. At present, 40 percent of Brunswick EMC's distribution are underground (about 2,000 miles). The Brunswick project continues at about 150 to 200 miles of line per year.

The NCUC's Public Staff concluded by recommending that utilities carry on the following programs: "1) identify the overhead facilities in each region it serves that repeatedly experience reliability problems based on measures such as the number of outages or number of customer-hours out of service, 2) determine whether conversion to underground is a cost-effective option for improving reliability of those facilities, and, if so, 3) develop a plan for converting those facilities to underground in an orderly and efficient manner, taking into account the outage histories and the impact on service reliability."

The full report can be seen on the Web at www.ncuc.commerce.state.nc.us



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TRI-COUNTY EMC

foreman sets a new speed record for poletop rescue

Top photo: Leonard Person of Tri-County EMC in his record-setting poletop performance preparing to lower the dummy.

Above: After making his Mayday call, he heads for the pole.

(Photos by Michael E.C. Gery)

After he finished second in the statewide Poletop Rescue Competition last time, Leonard Person of Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation vowed he would place first the next time. He had placed second the time before, and second the time before that, and third the time before that. Sure enough, when his turn came up at the November 2003 competition, he not only won, he also set a new speed record.

A right-of-way crew foreman from Dudley, Leonard Person has been climbing trees and poles for 28 years and has competed in several tree-climbing competitions. He has a utility pole in his back yard that he uses for fun and practice. It's paid off. He's won cash prizes each time he's competed in the Poletop Rescue Competition. His first-prize earning in November 2003 was $1,000.

To reach the Raleigh competition, linemen from the state's electric cooperatives must first win the poletop rescue championship among contenders from their co-op. Poletop rescue is an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requirement. The North Carolina electric cooperatives set the standard that each lineman must receive annual training and must perform the drill in less than five minutes. The drill consists of a lineman making a Mayday call, donning climbing gear and tools, climbing 20 feet up a pole, safely lowering a 120-pound dummy and initiating lifesaving procedures. The statewide event – held every two years — is organized and judged by members of the co-ops' statewide Job Training and Safety program, directed by Tommy C. Greer.

Leonard Person's record-setting time was 1 minute, 37.99 seconds.

Frank McIntyre of Pee Dee EMC finished second at 1:46.15. Alan Grooms of French Broad EMC (the 2001 winner) was third at 1:57.10. Dean Stone of Union Power was fourth at 1:59.34. Shay Reed of EnergyUnited was fifth at 2:05.22.

Randolph EMC's Dave Rowe provided commentary to the crowd that assembled for the event outside a shopping mall near the cooperatives' statewide office in Raleigh. Rowe is a commentator for Jefferson-Pilot Sports and former defensive standout for the Super Bowl champion Oakland Raiders.

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Hillsborough native Carey Bateman was 12 when he saw his first NASCAR race at the Occoneechee Speedway in 1959. He and his friends waded across the Eno River, clamored up the bank, and snuck into the infield to see Cotton Owens and Lee Petty battle for first place. The speedway hosted two races each year, and for the next six years Bateman, a redheaded kid living across the river from the track's backstretch, saw them all. It was here that he first met Robert "Junior" Johnson, who nicknamed him "Red." Now, more than 40 years later, Bateman visits the speedway almost once a week. He is one of three trail stewards for the Historic Occoneechee Speedway Trail (HOST).

The 44-acre property sits on the National Register of Historic Places and is home to the only surviving speedway from NASCAR's inaugural 1949 season. A three-mile walking trail now crisscrosses the clay track carved out of the floodplain by Pontiacs and Oldsmobiles driven by the likes of Ned Jarrett and Fireball Roberts. The trail opened to the public in September 2003.

Located east of Hillsborough, the speedway site has a rich history dating back to the 17th century. The Occoneechee band of the Saponi Nation made their home here, living off the fertile ground and abundant wildlife of the Eno River Valley. In the late 1800s, General Julian Carr owned the land, and it became known as Occoneechee Farm. Carr raced horses and built a large barn and a half-mile racetrack on the farm. You can still see the gray stone walls that marked its grand entryway before it was subdivided into several smaller farms.

In the 1940s, NASCAR founder William France flew over Occoneechee Farm in one of his adventures as a pilot. From the air he could see the horse track and an expanse of open land along the river – the perfect venue for a mile-long automobile racetrack. France launched his new racing association in December of 1947, and in January of 1948 he purchased the land with help from Enoch Stanley and three other investors. By June of 1948 cars were roaring down the oval dirt track kicking up dust. The 20-year lifespan of the notorious Occoneechee Speedway had begun.

Don Moffitt

The Occoneechee Speedway Trail today, looking from the grandstand to the track.

The NASCAR Strictly Stock Series, now the Winston Cup Series, was born in 1949. In April of that year, 17,000 screaming fans filled the stadium seats to cheer their favorite drivers to victory. As one of only three East Coast tracks measuring a mile, Occoneechee was a superspeedway. The distance allowed drivers to go faster here than they could on the shorter tracks. So fast, they often careened out of control, landing their cars on the riverbank. Non-paying onlookers climbed trees along the riverbank to get a glimpse of the spectacle.

Carey Bateman remembers those early races as distinctly different from the multimillion-dollar productions fans see today.

"We would go up to the concession stand to get a Coke once in awhile, but we spent most of the race in the pits, talking to the drivers and the mechanics," he says.

That's where he formed a friendship with Junior Johnson.

"Most of the drivers were regular guys from poor families, and they were in it for the love of the race, not for the money," Bateman says. "I remember one driver, a black man named Wendell Scott, who did everything himself. He'd pull into the pit, change his tires, sit and drink a cola and get back out there. He had to love racing, because he lost money on every single one."

Bateman admired the drivers, especially Johnson, who made the most of their humble origins. "Everything Junior learned about cars, he learned on a farm. He knew how to fix things – he had to – and it helped him succeed at racing." Johnson was voted NASCAR's Most Popular Driver in 1961 and is ranked eighth on the Winston Cup Series all-time win list. Legend says he sharpened his aggressive driving skills running moonshine down rural North Carolina roads.

One Junior Johnson race was particularly memorable for Bateman.

"Joe Weatherly was favored to win, but Johnson took home the victory," he says, "Junior was my man in racing, and it was Jayne Mansfield who handed him the trophy."

Bateman can still point to the spot, now surrounded by pine trees, where Mansfield climbed out of the convertible to join her husband, Mr. Universe Mickey Hargitay, in their private limousine. But instead of riding the half-mile out to the main road in the limo, the two celebrities walked with Bateman and his friends.

They're kickin' up dust again at the Orange Speedway

35 years after Richard Petty won the last race here, the Occoneechee Speedway re-opened as a historic trail

By Sidney Cruze

Don Moffitt

An aerial view of the Orange Speedway in action during the 1960s. Inset photo shows a primary sign for today's trails, leading into "Spectator Trace" that goes behind the old grandstand.

Courtesy of CAHPT

"I think they liked talking to us," Bateman says. "Here I was telling Hargitay, whose shoulders took up most of the limousine's back seat, that his wife was the most beautiful woman I had ever seen. He said 'I tell you what, you come back in 20 years, and I'll fight a duel with you to see who wins her.'"

Bateman left with a lipstick-autographed napkin and a new word in his vocabulary. "I was about 13, and it was the first time I'd ever heard the word duel used that way," he says.

The speedway closes

These Sunday NASCAR races were not popular with everyone in Hillsborough, and a group of citizens organized to stop them. They were successful, and on September 15, 1968, the black-and-white checkered flag fell for the last time behind Richard Petty. Tracks that were longer, paved, and locally supported replaced the racecourse, known since 1954 as the Orange Speedway.

Thirty years later, the speedway attracted the attention of Preservation North Carolina, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting North Carolina's historic sites, and Richard Jenrette, the preservationist and founding partner of the Wall Street brokerage firm Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette, Inc. Jenrette's Classical American Homes Preservation Trust (CAHPT) owns Ayr Mount, a restored 1815 Federal period plantation that sits across the Eno River from the speedway.

In 1997, Preservation North Carolina bought the NASCAR site from the estates of France and Stanley with funding from the James M. Johnston Trust and Jenrette's Classical Preservation Trust, which took title to the land and placed it under conservation easements that will protect it from future development.

People visiting the speedway today will find sycamore trees growing 25 feet tall amidst the rusted tin walls that once housed the concession stand and ticket booth. Blackberry brambles cover the concrete stadium seats, and wildflowers bloom along the well-worn track. Walking to the river, they can get a glimpse of the fence "Red" and his friends climbed over to get into the races.

Bateman's hair is silver now, and he chuckles when he thinks back to those carefree days. For him, working as a trail steward is coming full circle. "When I was a boy, the Exchange Club ran the track's concession stand. Now I'm the president of the Exchange Club."

He's thrilled the track is being preserved. "Since we opened the trail I've been surprised by the number of people coming out to walk it. And I never thought things would grow like this." He looks up, and the bill of his maroon HOST baseball cap points to the sky. "It's like the trees have been here forever."

Sidney Cruze is a freelance writer with an interest in North Carolina's historic places. She lives in Durham.

How I Got My Name

Your name is a big deal. In most cases, it stays with you for life. You mention it several times each day, and other people call your name just as often. Your name sometimes describes how you look and act, too, as in "She just doesn't look like a Martha." Nicknames can get even more descriptive: Too Tall Jones, Pee Wee Reese, Fats Domino.

The stories you sent us about your names are terrific. Some are outrageous, other sentimental, others unbelievable.

Thanks to everyone who sent in a story. The judges' selections are on these pages. You can see more on our Web site: www.carolinacountry.com

Next month we'll publish your "home improvement horror stories." [Deadline was Dec. 15.] For the remaining themes and rules in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series, see page 20.

— Michael E.C. Gery

THE PHANTOM GIRLFRIEND

In 1942 when I was born, World War II was going on, and my mom's brother was stationed overseas. Mom writes a letter to my uncle and asks him to name her newborn baby girl. At that time some people didn't name their babies until they developed their personality, so the name would fit the child.

Uncle doesn't have any idea what to name the baby. He doesn't want his sister to worry about the situation he was in. He writes a letter telling Mom about the beautiful woman that he has met. Tells how they have fallen in love, and in spite of everything he has found happiness. He tells Mom to name her baby Mildred Marie after his girlfriend. In the letter he sends a 1942 hard dollar for the baby.

My mom never knew that my uncle was not telling the truth. Years later after her death, he tells me the real story. He did not have a girlfriend. While he was eating lunch in a café, the waitress came over to get his order. He asked the waitress her name. "Mildred Marie," she replied.

My name is Mildred Marie, and I still have that 1942 hard dollar.

Mildred Marie Kidd
Seagrove
Randolph EMC

THE PIANO MAN

I was born at Bailey in 1922. Some years earlier, my parents had bought a piano from Cullom Music Company in Wilson. Periodically, Mack Cullom, the son of the owner of the company, would come to the house to tune the piano.

On May 18, the day I was born, Mr. Cullom arrived to work on the piano soon after I had been delivered. As I was the tenth of 12 children, the seventh of eight boys, my parents had already used the names Johnny, Joseph, William, Clarence and other common names. Mr. Cullom asked if they had assigned me a name. When they said no, he suggested that they name me after his father. Thus I acquired the name Ambrose Nuel.

The elder Mr. Cullom's tombstone can be found in Maplewood Cemetery in Wilson. My wife and I have visited it.

Ambrose Nuel Manning
Emerald Isle
Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

THE BANTAM AND THE BEE

My son was always sort of clumsy and large. In his senior year of high school at Rosewood High School he was continuing his football career. He also enjoyed raising bantam chickens and had an old rooster with long spurs. One day he arrived at football practice and informed the coach he would be unable to practice because the rooster had spurred him on the top of his foot, and on the way back to the house he stepped on a bumblebee with the same foot. His coach replied, "Okay, sit down Bumblechicken." This became his nickname. After 18 years now, people still call him that.

Olivia Rash
Goldsboro
Tri-County EMC

ALL THAT IMMIGRATION

The way I got my name is a small part of American history. My great-grandfather's name was Samuel Levintonsky. He was born in Gluk-Hov, Russia. He was a Russan Jew. He came to New York as one of the thousands of immigrants wanting a better life. He must have felt encouraged when he saw the Statue of Liberty in New York for the first time. When he got to the immigration office, they shortened his name to Levinson.

One of Samuel's sons immigrated to Florida and shortened his name to Aaron Vinson for business purposes. Aaron had seven children, including my dad, Steve. When my dad grew up he changed his last name back to Levinson to carry on the family name.

Steve had five children, including me, and immigrated to North Carolina. My brother and I will be proud to carry on the family name, and I hope never to immigrate again because "nothing could be finer than to be in Carolina."

Joshua Levinson
Rutherfordton
Rutherford EMC

THE CARING NUN

At great personal sacrifice, my immigrant grandparents sent my mother to boarding school in Canada where she had been born. When she was about 14, my mother contracted a serious infection and was put in the isolation section of the infirmary. This was 1930. Her father was a factory worker, and there were many younger siblings, so her parents couldn't go to her. She was very ill, possibly contagious, but a kind and caring young nun took a mattress and stayed with my mother night and day. My mother always credited her with saving her life and told the nun that she would name her first daughter after her. Sister Charlotte thought that this was a nice thought but the young teenager would surely forget all about this by the time she married.

They corresponded for over 60 years, and my namesake and I got to see one another many times during the course of that friendship. During her retirement years she would take a yearly vacation to visit my parents and my family. I have several of her needlepoint pictures hanging in my house alongside my mother's oil paintings.

Charlotte Montillo
Wake Forest
Wake EMC

I WAS PESTER TO HIM

My name is Kristi. Twenty years ago I had another name. It was Pester.

I can't tell you when I acquired that name or if a certain event caused it to become mine. I can only tell you that my grandfather gave me the name.

When I was a kid I followed my grandfather everywhere. He was a tobacco farmer, so the trips were early and at times messy. He had a truck that made an "ahooga" sound. He would drive around to my bedroom window and toot the horn to pick me up.

When I turned 13, I went out to see my grandparents. When I came in the door Granddaddy said, "Happy Birthday, Kristi." He said, "You are too old to be called Pester."

"I will always be Pester to you," I said.

I did not always like the name anyway. I would get mad sometimes about my name. It took him taking it away from me to realize how precious a gift the name was.

Others have called me Pester, but that is not who I am anymore. The most important part of that name is gone: my granddaddy.

Kristi de Costa
Moncure
Central EMC

THE MAN FROM THE CO-OP

My mom and dad, Jesse and Ruby Thompson, from the Pee Dee community near Mt. Gilead, were devoted members of Randolph EMC for many years, and my mom is still on Randolph EMC. My mother is now 87 years old, and my father passed away 10 years ago.

For many, many years since I was a youngster, the annual Randolph EMC Membership Meeting was something that they looked forward to each year. Back in the early days, I remember that one big prize, such as a stove or washing machine, was given away. During the earlier years when my parents attended the meetings, they became familiar with an EMC director or employee — I'm not sure what his exact title was — but his name was Quinton Hussey. My mom liked the name so much that she named me Quinton.

I still live in the Pee Dee community and am a member of the Randolph EMC. I appreciate them and the good service we receive. My wife and I and our children have always attended the Randolph EMC annual meetings also. I can thank Quinton Hussey for the name that I now have had for 52 years. I also passed it down as a middle name to my son.

Quinton Thompson
Pee Dee
Randolph EMC

Editor's note: Mr. Hussey was the manager of member services at Randolph EMC for nearly 40 years. He is still an active member of the co-op and lives in Asheboro.

INSPIRATION FOR MY GRANDMOTHER

When I was born 15 years ago, my parents gave me the name Faith Danielle Gilliard. My middle name isn't really important, but my first name never fails to serve as a reminder of what God has done for me, my family and especially Mom-Mom.

A few months before I was born, my grandmother, Mom-Mom, was diagnosed with breast cancer. I have grown up with a wonderful Christian background, so as soon as word got around, family and friends began praying. We had to have faith that she would be healed. It was a difficult time for everyone

continued on

Holding her grandbaby.

continued from p. 19

She probably knew she would be so weak from all the chemotherapy by the time I was born, and that she wouldn't even be able to hold me. So, as one more statement of hope, my parents named me "Faith." This inspired Mom-Mom. I've even heard her say that she just knew she "had to make it so she could see her grandbaby."

Mom-Mom was released from chemo seven months later. And guess what? She's still with us today, happy and healthy as can be.

Faith Gilliard
Lexington
Energy United

TOO MANY BETTIE LOUS

In regards to how I got my name, I was born at home. A crazy woman who helped when babies were born was there. She named all boy babies something, and she named all girl babies Bettie Lou. My parents were young and didn't say anything.

The doctor was as crazy as the woman was and put Bettie Lou on my birth certificate. My daddy didn't like Bettie Lou, so he called me Marie. Until I was grown I thought I had three names.

Marie R. McSwain
Cherryville
Rutherford EMC

WHAT HAPPENED TO MARION?

I was born in 1927 near Leicester, N.C. My mother, who gave birth at home, intended that my name should be Marion Curtis.

My maternal grandmother insisted that I be called Fred. So I went through 11 years of school as Fred Curtis Murphy, thinking that my real first name was Marion.

When I decided to join the Navy at the age of 18, I wrote to Raleigh to request my birth certificate. I received a birth certificate in the mail with a letter explaining that there was no record of the birth of Marion Curtis Murphy, but the certificate enclosed was for the son born to my parents on the date indicated. For the first time I learned that my name was Christopher Douglas Murphy.

Did the doctor who delivered me forget my name, or did he confuse me with another baby he had delivered? I will never know. I often wonder if somewhere there was a Marion Curtis who thought his name was Christopher Douglas.

Having spent nearly 50 years as a Christian minister, I am glad, in spite of the confusion, that I have a name that means "Christ-bearer."

C.D. 'Fred' Murphy
Lincolnton
Rutherford EMC

THE HELPFUL TRAIN PASSENGER

When my mother was a girl of 17, she was traveling by train on her first trip out of the North Carolina mountains to visit her older married sister in New Jersey.

She knew nothing about how she should act nor what to say or do. On the train was a girl on her way back to college, an older and more sophisticated traveler. They sat together. She told Mother what to do and say and what to expect. She was very kind.

Mother never saw her again nor heard from her, but when she married and had her first baby, she remembered the kindness of a stranger and called her baby girl Lois after the girl on the train. I was born six years after that train trip in 1934.

Lois A. Heun
Mill Spring
Rutherford EMC

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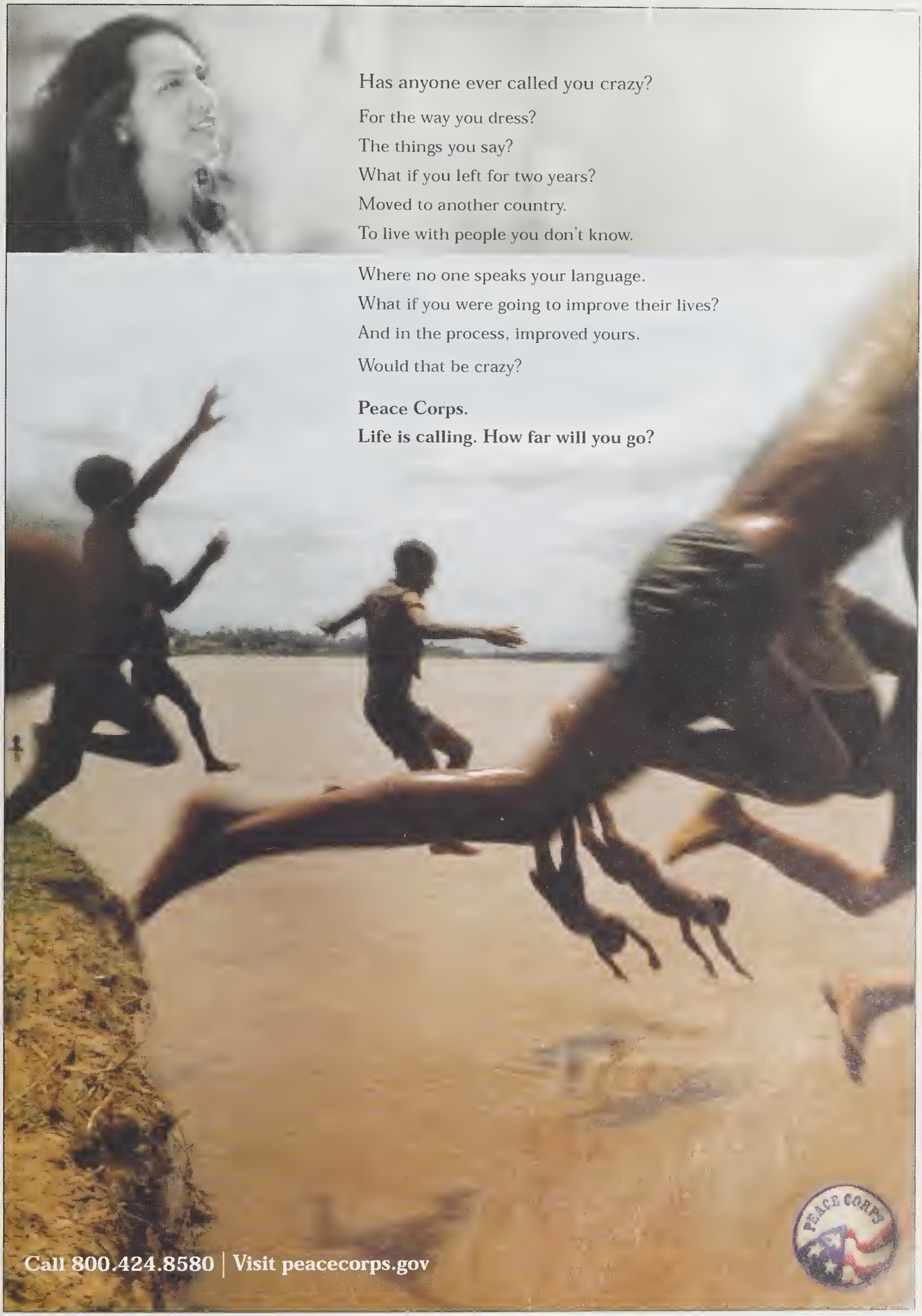
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An armchair tour of North Carolina's atlas oddities

by Jay Barnes

I love geography. I'm especially fond of my trusty atlas of North Carolina's roads, cities and towns. Though I've traveled all over this great state, my atlas reminds me that there are countless places I've never explored. Hidden crossroads and tiny towns with unfamiliar names dot the landscape from the Blue Ridge to the Atlantic.

And their names cause me to wonder.

A closer look at my atlas reveals the strange and quirky names given to places across the state. At first I was just curious, but when I really started looking, I found plenty of reasons to laugh out loud.

I'd heard of Lizard Lick. And I even knew where to find Tick Bite (it's in Lenoir County). But I never knew there was a Honeymoon, or a Finger, or a Loafer's Glory, North Carolina. And the closer I looked at the names in the index (Index is in Ashe County), the greater the riddle became (Riddle is in Camden County).

What were they thinking when they named Frog Level, Goat Neck, Cat Square, or Lizard Lick? And how about Toast? (You'd have to travel up to Virginia to find Breakfast.) Scanning the fine print in my atlas, I also found Shoe, Beard, Tuxedo, Laboratory, and Spies.

And who would want to live in Colon?

Take the armchair atlas tour, and you could visit Small (population 300), or squeeze into Micro (population 479). You could drive from Happy Top down to Bottom, which is some 200 miles down the Interstate. You'll want to visit Bachelor and Best, and don't miss Faith, Trust, Comfort, and Relief. Hurry on over to Quick, Brief, and Speed. Spend some extra time in Luck and Intelligence, but skip the drive over to Worry.

You could travel to Milwaukee or Minneapolis and never cross the state line. Also on the tour are Buffalo, Denver, Honolulu, Houston, Orlando, Phoenix, and Pensacola. While you're on the road, drive on to Belfast, Dublin, Bethlehem, and Palestine. And what tour of North Carolina's back roads would be complete without a stop in California, Maine, Nebraska, and Texas?

Depending upon your political preference, you could spend some time in Democrat or Republican, or if you're undecided swing by Independence. Along the way, you'll find Barber, Mechanic, Farmer, and Hooker. Earth, Sun, and Star are also on the atlas tour.

I guess it's no real surprise that North Carolina would have towns named Apple, Almonds, Cherry, Fig, Orange, Peach, and Sweetpea, but there is no Tobacco— just Tobaccoville. And there's also Gold, Sapphire, Silver City, and Emerald Isle.

What curious events led to the naming of Day Book and Meat Camp? What about Push, Duck, Trap, and Old Trap? There's also Radical, House, Chronicle, Fork, Alert, Crisp, and Erect. And have you ever stopped in to see Cleopatra, Hendrix, or Eli Whitney?

And then there, on Highway 705 in Randolph County, I found the one town name that might explain it all: Whynot.

They aren't where they're supposed to be

But then I noticed another oddity as I perused the pages of my atlas—many of North Carolina's cities and towns aren't where they're supposed to be!

I knew that Washington was not in Washington County, but in Beaufort County. And Beaufort's not in Beaufort County, its over in Carteret County. But as I looked around, I found a staggering number of misplaced cities located outside the bounds of the counties that share their names.

It's as if someone wanted to play a cruel joke on unsuspecting travelers and send them to all the wrong places.

So if you will, indulge me as we review the following cities and towns, none of which are located in the counties that bear their names:

Ash is in Brunswick County, Brunswick is in Columbus County, and Columbus is in Polk County. Craven is not in Craven County, but in Rowan County. Rowan isn't in Rowan County, it's in Sampson County.

Stanley is in Gaston County, Gaston is in Northampton County. Watauga is in Macon County, and Macon is in Warren County. Madison is over in Rockingham County, but Rockingham is in Richmond County.

Cleveland is not in Cleveland County, Franklin is not in Franklin County, and Guilford is not in Guilford County– they're all in Rowan County.

Edgecombe is in Pender, Pender is in Halifax. Caswell is in Jones, Cherokee is in Swain, Clay is in Granville, Davidson is in Mecklenburg, Graham is in Alamance, Haywood is in Chatham, Henderson is in Vance, Iredell is in Brunswick, Orange is in Sampson, and Stokes is in Pitt.

But wait– there's more!

Lenoir is in Caldwell County, but Caldwell isn't. Caldwell is in both Mecklenburg and Orange counties. Jackson is not in Jackson County, but there's one in Northampton County and Union County. Union can be found in Macon and Hertford counties, and the only Hertford is in Perquimans County.

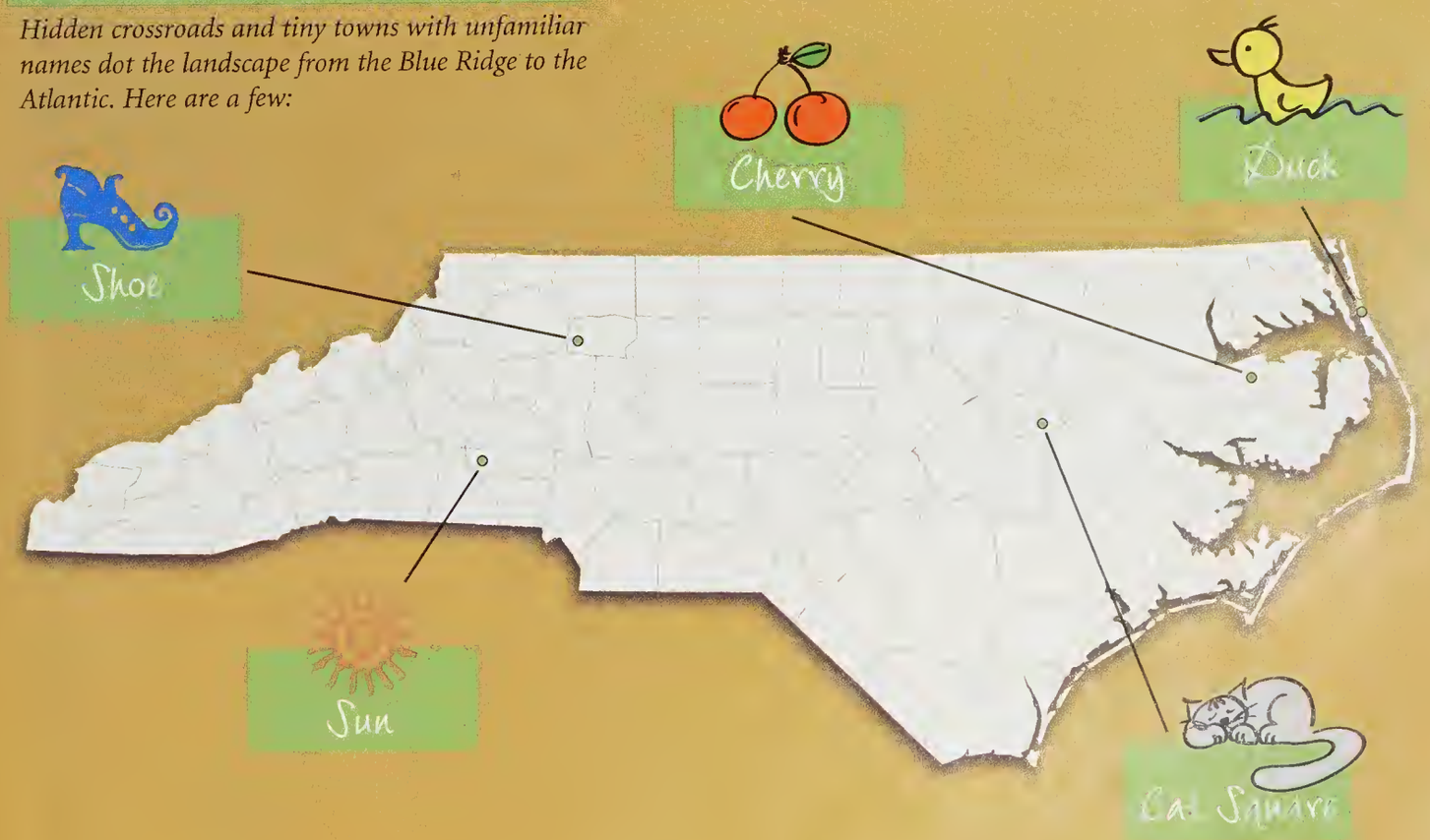
So before you venture out to cruise the winding back roads that criss-cross the Tar Heel state in search of never-heard-of places, it might be a good idea to know where you're heading before you leave– and take along your trusty atlas.

The author acknowledges the North Carolina State Road Atlas, © 1999, published by Alexandria Drafting Company, as the information source for this article.

Jay Barnes is the author of "North Carolina's Hurricane History" and co-author with Richard Moore of "Faces from the Flood: Hurricane Floyd Remembered," to be available in late February from the University of North Carolina Press. He lives in Salter Path.

Have you heard of Shoe?

Hidden crossroads and tiny towns with unfamiliar names dot the landscape from the Blue Ridge to the Atlantic. Here are a few:



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Hertford County
History and Culture

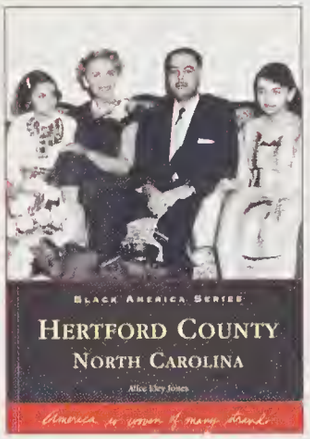
A new book by historian Alice Eley Jones of Murfreesboro looks at Hertford County's history. As part of the Black America Series, published by Arcadia Publishing of Charleston, S.C., "Hertford County, North Carolina" shows and tells how people here blended their African, English and Meherrin cultures to produce an unusual set of goals, values and achievements.

Hertford County was created in 1759 from parts of Bertie, Chowan and Northampton counties. It has always been primarily an agricultural area that grows corn, cotton, peanuts, tobacco and soybeans, though manufacturing has developed here as well. It's 2002 population of about 22,037 ranked it 77th among the state's 100 counties. The Chowan River forms its eastern boundary, and the Meherrin River flows into the Chowan from Murfreesboro in the western part of the county. Other towns include county seat Winton, Ahoskie (the largest town), Cofield, Como, Harrelsville, Mapleton, Tunis, St. John, Menola and several smaller communities.

Alice Eley Jones writes that black settlers preceded English in this area, probably soon after Sir Francis Drake in the late 1580s deposited on North Carolina's coast enslaved West Africans and Caribbean people who he had picked up on raids in the West Indies. Permanent English settlers arrived from the Virginia area after 1650, when Nathaniel Batts moved here. Meherrin people, of the Iroquois tribe, she says, migrated to the area from Virginia in the late 1600s and early 1700s. Slaves are noted in local census records as early as 1720.

By 1860, more than half of Hertford County's population was black — a mixture of free blacks, slaves and people of mixed race. Jones writes that at this time, African culture played a dominant role in the society, noting, for example, that "housing styles were more African than English or Meherrin." Many enslaved and free blacks of the area engaged in the discreet communication network of the time that included carrying news and information among the river port towns and aided "Bertie County slave conspiracies" that were quashed in 1795 and 1802.

"Africans encountered a world that depended on their labor but had little respect for their cultural traditions," she writes. "As a result the African-American experience has often been misinterpreted, their historical significance obscured. Their stories in their words is the theme of this book."



The book includes many photographs. The cover shows Tommy Boone, who had a shoe repair shop in Murfreesboro, with his wife, Susie (a Hertford County teacher), and their daughters Tommisene (left) and Bettie Jean. The other photo shows students at R.L. Vann school.

The book contains more than 200 photographs of Meherrin people and traditions, free people of color, slaves, artisans, churches, homes, schools, institutions and people who have made considerable contributions to Hertford County's development.

One of those person is Madge Watford Hunter, of the mixed Meherrin and free black community of Pleasant Plains. Along with her husband, businessman Howard J. Hunter Sr., she was an educator and a major force in Hertford County's society from the 1950s through the 1980s. Another was Calvin Scott Brown, a Salisbury native and Baptist preacher who came to Winton and founded Chowan Academy in 1886. The school became Waters Normal Institute in 1893 and eventually Calvin Scott Brown High School. Another was Katie A. Hart, founder of the only independent African-American public library in the U.S. Of its beginnings, Jones writes, "She loaded the trunk of her car with books and newspapers and drove to the outmost regions of the county to provide reading materials."

"Hertford County, North Carolina," published in 2002 by Alice Eley Jones, is 128 pages in softcover. It is available for $22 (includes shipping) from King Enrichment, P.O. Box 397, Murfreesboro, NC 27855. Phone: (252) 398-8192.

— Michael E.C. Gery

Personal computing advice by Reid Goldsborough

Internet service for less than $10 per month: the pros and cons

Broadband may be the cutting edge in Internet access, with cable and DSL modem users surfing the Internet at blazing speeds. But you pay more for this privilege.

Many Internet novices are America Online subscribers. AOL is the world's largest Internet service provider (ISP) and has succeeded by offering new users an easy way to get online, providing its own content as well access to the larger Internet, and doing saturation mailings of its discs. But AOL is the most expensive way to access the Internet using a dial-up phone line, costing $23.90 per month for unlimited access. If you're looking to economize, you can do better.

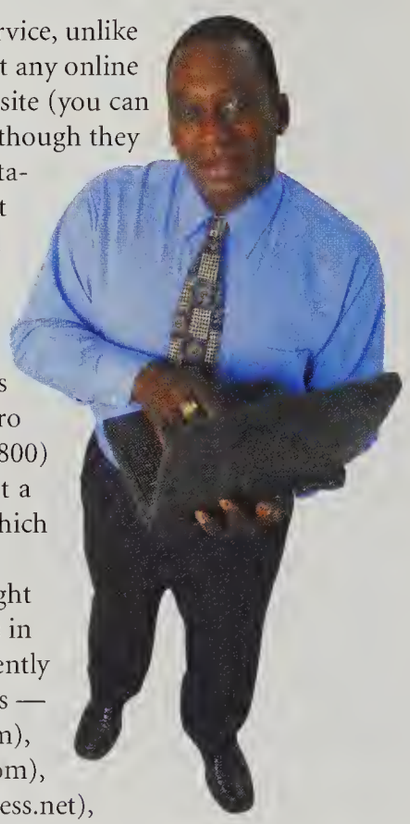
The two largest value-priced ISPs are NetZero (www.netzero.com) and Juno (www.juno.com), both offerings of United Online, a company that was created when the two services merged in September 2001. About a year later United Online bought another discount ISP, Bluelight, from Kmart Corp. All three services provide unlimited Internet access, so unlike some other discount services, you're not limited by the number of hours you can spend online each month. The cost for each is $9.95 per month. Mac users are restricted to NetZero and Juno.

The latest versions of NetZero and Juno software are virtually identical. NetZero and Juno also use the same access numbers. The only difference between the two, according to a company spokesperson, is that NetZero has access numbers in the U.S. and Canada while Juno has access numbers only in the U.S. Because of brand loyalty, United Online plans to continue both services.

I gave NetZero a whirl using a PC and a 56K modem. It performed well over the course of a week — no busy signals, no dropped connections, and good dial-up download speeds.

NetZero and Juno have local access numbers nationwide, though as with all ISPs you need to first check that you don't incur charges from your phone company, which depends on how far the nearest local access number is from you and on your telephone calling plan.

If you're on a very tight budget, NetZero and Juno also offer access that's totally free (Bluelight doesn't), though it's available only for PC users. In exchange for not having to open your wallet, however, you may have more difficulty getting past busy signals to connect; you'll get bombarded with banner ads, pop-up ads, and e-mail ads; you'll be limited to 10 hours of surfing time per month; and you'll have less e-mail storage space.



Even if you opt for pay service, unlike with pricier ISPs, you won't get any online storage space to put up a Web site (you can use free Web hosting services, though they typically come with more limitations), and phone tech support costs $1.95 per minute (e-mail tech support is free).

You can obtain software for using each service via a free download from each service's Web site or by phoning NetZero at (877) 638-9376 or Juno at (800) 879-5866 and requesting that a CD-ROM be mailed to you, which costs $9.99.

NetZero, Juno, and Bluelight aren't the only discount games in town. PC World magazine recently tested five smaller cut-rate ISPs — 550Access (www.550access.com), AllVantage (www.allvantage.com), Access4Less.net (www.access4less.net), 650DialUp (www.650dialup.com), and Access4Cheap (www.access4cheap.com) — comparing them with NetZero. They all performed on par with it and cost slightly less, from $5.50 to $6.95 per month. Some have small set-up fees while NetZero and Juno do not.

Interestingly, two of them — 650DialUp and Access4Cheap — provide 10 megabytes of free storage space for a personal Web site, the same as pricier ISPs such as Earthlink. One discount service, 550Access, doesn't provide traditional "POP" e-mail service — you have to use a clunkier free Web-based e-mail service such Hotmail or Yahoo Mail.

These small, inexpensive ISPs have other downsides. Access numbers are more likely to change as they aggressively seek to control their costs, and low profit margins mean there's less likelihood that any given service will survive long-term. As I'm writing this, in fact, Access4Cheap has just gone belly up. Your best bet is to avoid signing a long-term contract with any discount service.

AOL has been losing subscribers to both cut-rate ISPs and pricier broadband providers. It reported that it lost 846,000 subscribers in the second quarter of 2003. To try to avoid losing more subscribers to the discount ISPs, AOL is planning to offer sometime early this year a new $9.95 per month stripped-down service branded with the familiar Netscape name that still provides unlimited Internet access.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book "Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway." He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or http://www.netaxs.com/~reidgold/column.

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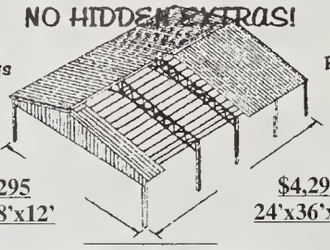

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A	J	N	U	C	R	T	E	Y	I

Match the boxes above with the boxes below to create a division problem. Solve the problem and write your answer in the box tops. Then match boxes again to find a hidden word.

U		U	A	T	I	J	E	C

MATHWORDS

Each letter in this division puzzle stands for a digit. Can you replace the digits that unscramble JANUARY?

```
          J A N U A R Y
      ---------------
D | A U N Y A R J
    D
    ---
    J U
    J U
    -----
        N
        N
        ---
          Y
          M
          ---
          J A
          J U
          -----
            U R
            U Y
            -----
              U J
              U J
              -----
```

answers on page 41.

POLES APART

Percy P. Cassidy

Too many square meals

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

i w g t n h a d p

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

i l t d o e a r t i w

Use the capital letters below to fill in the blanks above.

"A D E F G I L N O R S T U" means

p o w e r a n d l i g h t

And Then I Read

GUNMAN AT COLLEGE CLASSROOM KILLS HIMSELF, THEN WOUNDS TWO

Asheville Citizen-Times (9/18/03)

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B A D

_ _ _

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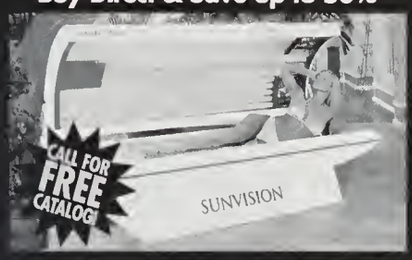

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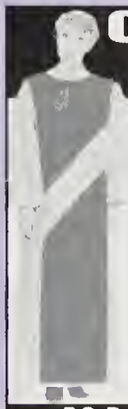

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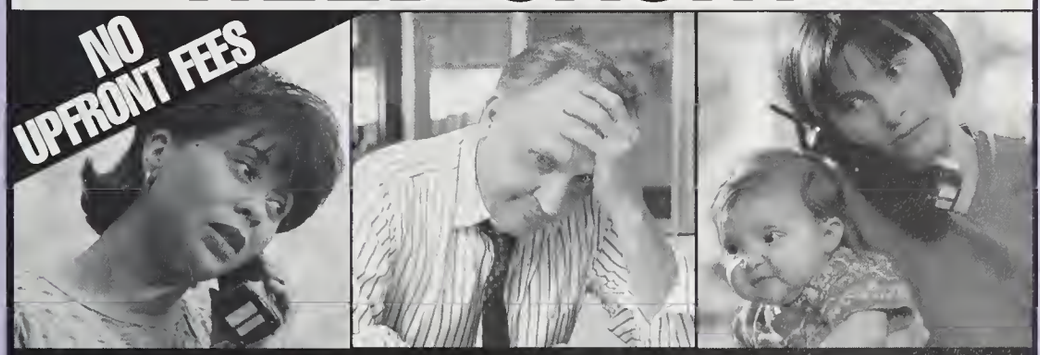

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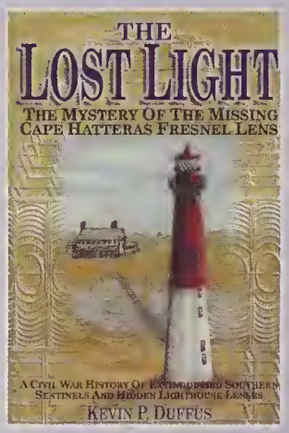

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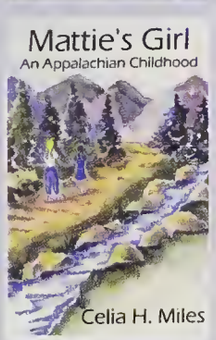
"A Thyme for Love" is a romance set on ThymeTable herb farm near Asheville. Cary,

attracted to her landlord who resists risking his heart and, he believes, his farm, immerses herself in photography and herbal lore. Both wonder about her brother's "development plans" and whether or not this is "a thyme for love." Along the way, Cary collects old-time recipes. Softcover, 214 pages, $14.95. In "Mattie's Girl: An Appalachian Childhood," young June chronicles the years (mid-1940s) between meeting her best friend, the irrepressible PeeDee, and losing her. She struggles to understand other deep losses and conflicts in the Jackson County community, and survives through the grace of family and friendship.



Softcover, 181 pages, $13.95. Both books are by Asheville author Celia H. Miles, and published by Infinity Publishing in Haverford, Pa. Call (877) 289-2665 or visit www.buybooksontheweb.com or www.infinity.com

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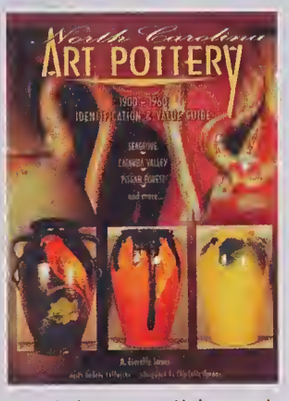


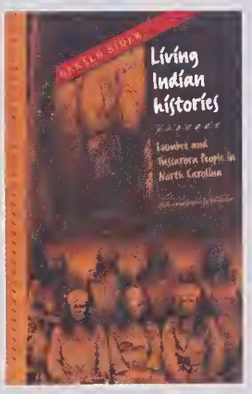
This identification and market value guide, which emphasizes pieces from 1900-1960, covers the transition from utilitarian art pottery, Catawba valley pottery, and potters such as the Coles, Cravens, Jugtown, and M.L. Owen. Author A. Everette James (with Rodney Leftwich) also explains condition, signs, stamps, shapes and symbols and their effect on value, and discusses the challenge of collecting rare and unusual pieces. "North Carolina Art Pottery 1900-1960" is hardcover and costs $24.95. 304 pages, more than 900 full-color photographs. Schroeder Publishing in Paducah, Ky. Visit www.collectorbooks.com or call (800) 626-5420.

"Biscuits, Spoonbread and Sweet Potato Pie"

Hailed as a classic upon its original publication in 1990, this redesigned edition offers 300 recipes to guide you through cornbreads, quick breads, custards, puddings, cookies, pies and cakes. Renowned Chapel Hill chef Bill Neal (1950-1991) provides the history behind many signature recipes, drawing inspiration from Native American, African American and European American recipes as well as his southern dishes. The late author demystifies beaten biscuits and revives vintage standbys such as baps and bannocks. Softcover, 400 pages, $19.95. Published by The University of North Carolina Press in Chapel Hill. Call (919) 966-3561 or visit www.uncpress.unc.edu

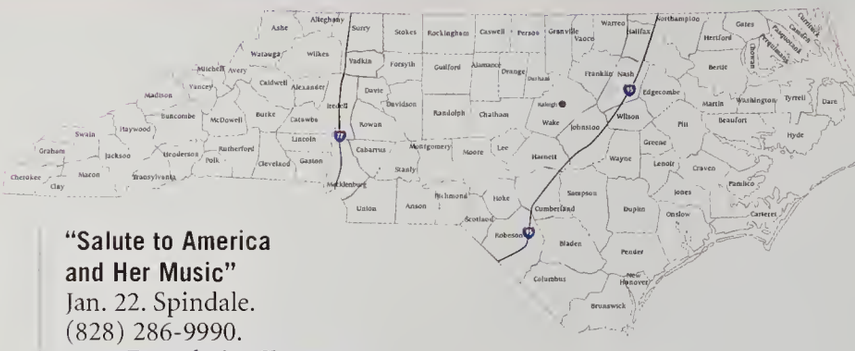
Lumbee and Tuscarora people

An updated edition of a comprehensive look at the Lumbee Indians has been published by the University of North Carolina Press. Anthropologist Gerald Sider has worked with and for the Indians of Robeson County for 35 years. His new "Living Indian Histories: Lumbee and Tuscarora People in North Carolina" adds substantial information to the developments in the Lumbee culture and experience between the 1980s and the present, as well as its previously published colonial history. With more than 40,000 registered members, the Lumbee are the ninth largest tribe in the U.S. and the largest east of the Mississippi River. While their effort is coming very close today, they still have not gained full federal recognition. Sider's book examines the roots of contemporary issues surrounding the Lumbee people. Softcover, 384 pages, ten pages of photographs. $22.50. Available in bookstores or call (800) 848-6224 or visit www.uncpress.unc.edu



January EVENTS

MOUNTAINS PIEDMONT COAST



MOUNTAINS

(west of I-77)

Art Films
Tuesdays. Highlands.
(828) 526-4949.
www.bascom-louisegallery.org

Paranormal Conference
Jan. 9-11. Asheville.
(800) 438-5800.
www.groveparkinn.com

Rodeo
Jan. 1-4. Asheville.
(828) 687-1414.

"Tempting Textures" Exhibit
Jan. 7-Feb. 20. West Jefferson.
(336) 246-2787.
www.ashecountryarts.org

Coffee House Talent
Jan. 10. Jefferson.
(336) 246-2787.

"Taming of the Shrew"
Jan. 16-Feb. 1. Hickory.
(828) 327-3855.
www.HCT.org

Cuban String Quartet
Jan. 16. Asheville.
(828) 298-5085.
www.main.nc.us/asheville chambermusic

Star Gazing
Jan. 17. Shelby.
(704) 487-8521.
www.clevelandcounty.com

MLK Day Celebration
Jan. 19. West Jefferson.
Free. (336) 246-2787.

"Salute to America and Her Music"
Jan. 22. Spindale.
(828) 286-9990.
www.FoundationShows.org

RV and Boat Show
Jan. 23-25. Asheville.
(828) 687-1414.

Medieval Times
Jan. 27. Fletcher.
(828) 687-1414.

"The Artful Teapot" examines the chameleon-like forms of the teapot. The exhibit is set to run Jan. 31-May 30 at the Mint Museum in Charlotte. Call (704) 337-2000 or visit www.mintmuseum.org

PIEDMONT

(between I-77 and I-95)

Planetarium Show
Through Jan. 4. Greensboro.
(336) 288-3769.
www.natsci.org

Morocco Photo Exhibit
Through Feb. 14.
Winston-Salem.
Free. (336) 758-5282.
www.wfu.edu/moa

Innovative Housing
Through April 11.
Winston-Salem.
(336) 725-1904.

Twelve Days of Christmas
Through Jan. 6. Chapel Hill.
(919) 933-2001.

Eva Hesse Exhibition
Through Feb. 1. Greensboro.
(336) 334-5770.
www.weatherspoon.uncg.edu

Walker Evans Photography
Through Jan. 10. Durham.
Free. (919) 660-3663.

KwanzaaFest 2004
Jan. 1. Durham.
Free. (919) 560-2729.

Deep River Canoe Trip
Jan. 1. Gulf.
(919) 898-4814.

New Year Hike
Jan. 2. Apex.
(919) 362-0586.
www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/visit/jord/home.html

"Rent"
Jan. 2-4. Raleigh.
(919) 831-6011.

Bridal Show
Jan. 4. Jamestown.
(336) 887-5413.
www.castlemulloch.com

Antique Military Show
Jan. 4-5. Raleigh.
(704) 282-1339.
www.TheCarolinaTrader.com

Saxaphonist David Sanborn
Jan. 18. Durham.
(919) 560-3030.
www.carolinatheatre.org/onstage/

Candlesticks Lecture
Jan. 20. Charlotte.
(704) 895-9342.

Gothic Film Festival
Jan. 24-26. Durham.
(919) 560-3030.
www.carolinatheatre.org/onstage/

Puzzle Art
Jan. 24-April 3. Winston-Salem. (336) 725-1904.
www.secca.org

"Titanic - The Musical"
Jan. 25. Yanceyville.
(336) 694-4591.

Deep River Park Bike/Run
January 25. Gulf.
(800) 316-3829.

JANUARY EVENTS

"Ragtime"
Jan. 30- Feb. 22. Fayetteville.
(910) 323-4234.
www.cfrt.org

African-American Art
Jan. 30-March 27.
Winston-Salem.
(336) 750-2458.
www.wssu.edu/diggs

Special EXHIBITS

MOUNTAINS

Air & Space Images
Through Feb. 8. Asheville.
Asheville Art Museum.
(828) 253-3227.
www.ashevilleart.org

Historical Museum
Kings Mountain.
(704) 739-1019.

Cradle of Forestry
Brevard.
(828) 877-3130.

Making Distilled Spirits
Through Jan. Mount Airy.
Mount Airy Museum of Regional History.
(336) 786-4478.
www.northcarolinamuseum.org

Dinosaur Eggs
Through May 16. Gastonia.
Schiele Museum.
(704) 866-6909.
www.schielemuseum.org

PIEDMONT

Assault on Germany
Through Jan. 25. Fayetteville.
Airborne Museum.
(910) 483-5311.
www.asomf.org

Southern Art Pottery
Through Jan. 4. Chapel Hill.
Chapel Hill Museum.
(919) 967-1400.
www.chapelhillmuseum.org

"Soaring Symbols: Eagles"
Through April 4. Charlotte.
Charlotte Museum of History.
(704) 568-1774.
www.charlottemuseum.org

"Top Speed"
Through Feb. 6. Charlotte.
Discovery Place.
(704) 372-6261.
www.discoveryplace.org

"Artful Teapot"
Jan. 31 through May 30.
Charlotte.
Mint Museum of Art.
(704) 337-2009.
www.mintmuseum.org

"Defying Gravity"
Through March 7. Raleigh.
N.C. Museum of Art.
(919) 839-6262.
www.ncartmuseum.org

"First Lady of Parachuting"
Jan. 14. Raleigh.
N.C. Museum of History.
(919) 715-0200.
www.ncmuseumofhistory.org

Moving Dinosaur Sculptures
Through Jan. 5. Durham.
Museum of Life and Science.
(919) 220-5429.
www.ncmls.org

Titanic Artifacts
Through Jan. 4. Raleigh.
N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences.
(919) 733-7450.
www.naturalsciences.org

Oakboro Regional Museum
Oakboro.
(704) 485-3612.

COAST

"How Things Work"
Through Jan. 4. Wilmington.
Cape Fear Museum.
(910) 341-4350.
www.capefearmuseum.com

Core Sound Waterfowl Museum
Harkers Island.
(252) 728-1500.
www.coresound.com

"Mariner's Menu"
Jan. 30. Beaufort.
N.C. Martime Museum.
(252) 728-7317.
maritime@ncmail.net

Chocolate Tastings
Jan. 31. Fayetteville.
(910) 424-2020.

COAST
(east of I-95)

Waterfowl Watching
Jan. 10-11. Beaufort.
(252) 728-7317.

Chamber Music
Jan. 10. Greenville.
(252) 328-4788.

Contra Dance
Jan. 10. Beaufort.
(252) 504-2787.
www.downeastfolkarts.org

Motorcycle Show
Jan. 16. Kinston.
(252) 527-2517.
www.kinstoncca.com

Truck & Tractor Pull
Jan. 16-17. Williamston.
(252) 330-4984.

Tango Brazilian Concert
Jan. 17. Morehead City.
(252) 504-2787.
www.downeastfolkarts.org

D'Vine Concert
Jan. 21. Oriental.
(252) 249-3362.
www.pamlicomusic.org

Dolphin Slides
Jan. 21. Beaufort.
(252) 728-7317.

American Chamber Music
Jan. 24. Morehead City.
(252) 728-4488.

Spiritual Ensemble
Jan. 30. Greenville.
(252) 328-4788.

ATV Crown Classic
Jan. 30-31. Williamston.
(336) 869-4900.
www.legacyatv.com

Wildlife Arts Festival
Jan. 30-Feb.1. Washington.
(252) 946-2897.
www.eastcarolinawildfowlguild.com

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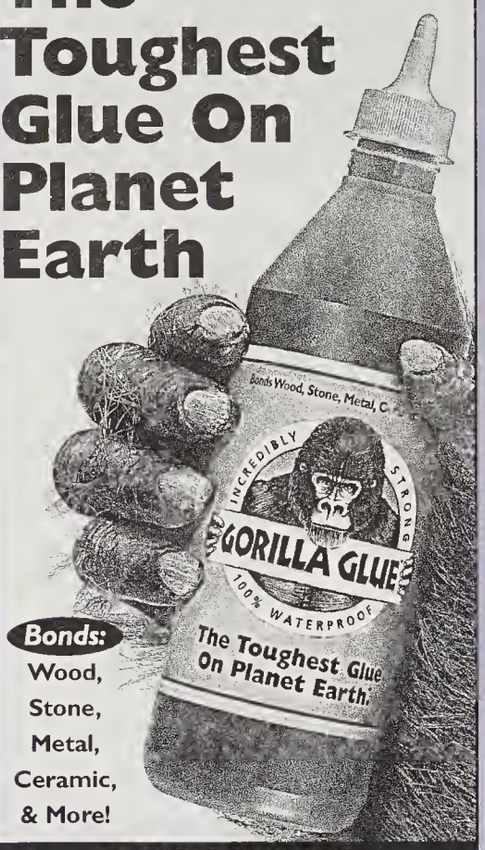

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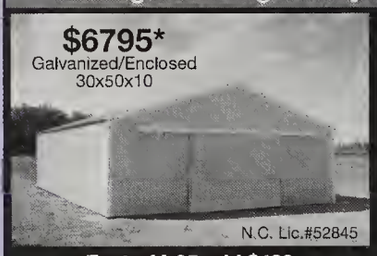

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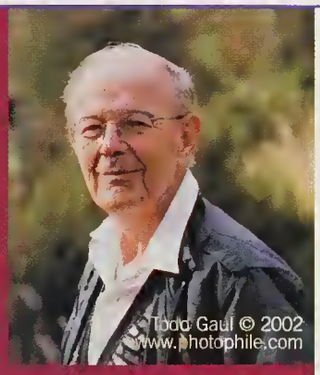

GARDENING FOCUS

Showpiece Plants

The ever-popular Aucuba with large dark-green or gold-spotted leaves makes a handsome plant. Prune only to remove diseased or dead branches or to keep plant size in bounds. Aucuba prunings make good cut foliage for home use or as fillers in flower arrangements. Under ideal conditions it will flower and bear red berries, so prune after berries have turned a dark color.

Japanese Photinia is among the few evergreens that give a big splash of red color in early spring when they put on a new spurt of growth. It's best to prune just before plants start growing in the spring.

Arborvitaes, junipers, and other needle-leafed shrubs need little pruning, but it's best to prune them some each year. Otherwise, they grow so big it's impossible to cut them back without seriously chopping up and injuring plants. Early spring is the best time to cut them back. Tips can be pruned back far enough so cut places are hidden by overlapping leaves and branches.

Only a few weeks will pass until outdoor gardening gets under way. During mild periods, pruning chores can begin. Now is the time to begin rose bush care.

Beginners roses

The South's longer growing season calls for special touches in rose care. Rewards include an eight-to-ten month blooming season. Roses need at least half-a-day's sunshine. Morning sun is best, so give them an eastern exposure if possible.

Cut back a few tree branches of healthy rose bushes if branches shade the bed. Do not place within 20 feet of a tree — the tree roots will use up the rose fertilizer and moisture. Dig at least eighteen feet deep in a well-drained spot. Roses do not like wet beds. Bed preparation is better if done in late fall, or preferably, late winter.

The ideal soil is made up of equal parts topsoil and loam, but any good garden soil will grow roses. Peat moss or well-rotted manure mixed into the bed will help greatly. Like Greta Garbo, roses like to be alone, so don't plant anything else in the bed. Plant bare-root roses in late winter when roses are dormant. Planted in fall, roses may start putting out tender shoots that get caught by a freeze. Planted in spring, they don't have time to get settled in the lower South. Some rose experts report good results from spring planting in the upper South.

Potted roses may be planted at any time. Keep soil from the pot secure around root system. Bare-root roots should go into a hole about one-and-a half feet across, and almost to the depth of the bed. Mound soil in center of the hole so graft will be even with the surface. Place plant on the mound, with roots spread out naturally over the mound. Fill the hole half full with soil, then water down. Finish filling with water again. This firms soil so no air pockets are left. Graft should be even with surface of soil.

Plant roses 2½ to 3 feet apart. Any good fertilizer will do the job; a 6-12-12 is often used. Do not fertilize at planting. On the first day of each month (March through September in the lower South and March through August in upper South), use about ½ cup in a circle around base of plant. Pull mulch back to apply fertilizer; then cover again. Water fertilizer in. If a soil test shows soil is very acid, add a bit of bonemeal or lime. Holding back on fertilizer in late summer slows down growth so plants are not caught in a too-active growth cycle when first freeze comes.

With proper care, Aucuba will bear red berries.

Good mulches

Pine straw is an ideal mulch for roses. Other good mulches are peat moss, rotted sawdust, wood chips, and rotted cotton burs. If mulch tends to pack, a thin layer of mulch is needed. But don't take it off and apply new mulch, unless you've slipped up on spraying and let blackspot leaves drop. Just keep adding mulch as it rots and settles down. Mulching prevents evaporation, thereby requiring less watering. It prevents freezing and thawing in winter that could damage plants beyond recall and helps prevent weed growth. Mulching also adds organic matter. If mulch packs, break it gently so water can soak in. Tender feeder roots are on the soil surface, so do not cultivate. A good mulch will do the job.

When weeds come through, it will be easy to pull them. How often to water? Pull back the mulch. Test an inch or two into soil for moisture. If soil is dry, then water. (Soak beds every seven to10 days unless it rains.) It's best to avoid watering leaves when watering roses; always water the base. Water throws blackspot and mildew spores all over the bed. A healthy rose bed is trouble to establish and maintain, but surely worth the trouble!

Newspapers to landfills

It's a good practice to contribute newspapers to community landfills where they are treated and pulverized into compost that is beneficial to plants.

For more January gardening advice, go to the "Carolina Gardens" section of www.carolinacountry.com

New sliding glass doors offer greater efficiency

French-style sliding doors simulate double-hinged doors.

By James Dulley

An old sliding glass patio door, even if it has standard double-pane glass, can be one of the biggest energy wasters in a home. Just sit by the door on a cold winter evening and you will probably feel how inefficient it is. Air leakage around the door is often the worse culprit. This is also true during the summer when warm moist air leaks indoors.

A sliding glass door is basically a huge hole in the insulated walls that enclose your house. An old door can have an insulation level of R-2 at the best. When you sit near a sliding glass door at night, heat from your body radiates to the cold outdoors causing you to feel colder than the room temperature. This often makes you turn the thermostat up, wasting energy.

You will be surprised at all the new efficiency features and many styles of sliding glass doors available. The highest energy-efficient glass for the sliding doors is as high as R-10. This super-efficient glass has triple panes, low-emissivity (low-e) coatings on two of the glass surfaces with krypton gas in the gaps between the panes. The krypton gas is very dense, which also reduces the outdoor noise transmission through the large glass panes.

The airtight seals are also better on the new door designs. Keep in mind, a sliding glass door has a lot of mating joints that must be sealed with weather-stripping. Much of the joint's area is a sliding seal, not compression as on a casement window or a hinged door. As your new door ages, keep an eye on the condition of the weather-stripping and replace it when it is worn. The manufacturers offer replacement kits.

Much recent design attention has been given to the styling of sliding glass doors. French-style patio doors are increasingly popular in new homes and for replacements. These have wider rails and stiles on the door frame to simulate the appearance of double-hinged doors. Optional matching grilles can be added over the glass for additional style.

Sliding glass doors cover a large span, so the frame's strength is critical. Typical frame material options for replacement sliding glass doors are aluminum, fiberglass, vinyl, wood and vinyl or aluminum-clad wood.

Fiberglass is one of the best low-maintenance materials for sliding glass door frames. I use this type in my home. The frames are made with a pultruded process, which is different from how fiberglass boat hulls and car bodies are produced. Pultrusion combines long glass fibers with strong resins to create an almost indestructible frame.

A fiberglass frame expands and contracts with temperature changes (hot summer sun to cold winter nights) at a similar rate as the glass panes. This reduces stresses within the door frame and along the seals where the glass panes rest in the frame. For a natural wood appearance, select one with a real oak veneer bonded over the indoor surface of the fiberglass frame.

Vinyl is another low-maintenance frame material to consider. Its color goes completely through the frame, so it looks good even with small scratches. Look for fusion-welded corners, metal reinforcement inside the frame and ball-bearing steel or nylon rollers. Vinyl or aluminum cladding over a wood frame minimizes its outdoor maintenance. All-aluminum frames should have a plastic thermal break between the outdoor and indoor surfaces.

The type of glass is key to energy efficiency. The triple-pane R-10 glass may be outside the budget for many homeowners. As a minimum, select double-pane, low-e glass. For hot climates, you may prefer to have tinted panes. In very cold climates, the R-10 glass may make economic sense or choose less-expensive R-6 triple-pane glass.

There are several options that can make your sliding glass door more secure. Multipoint lock and foot lock features require a thief to take more time to pry the door open. This is particularly true with a strong frame material such as fiberglass or aluminum-clad wood. If you are really concerned about security, select double swinging or tilt/turn (swings on hinges or tilts in at top for ventilation) doors instead. Some closely resemble sliders and they are more difficult to force open.

Write for (instantly download-www.dulley.com) Update Bulletin No. 939 - buyer's guide of 15 fiberglass, vinyl and wood sliding/hinged patio door manufacturers listing sizes, glass options, colors, decorative, and security features. Please include $3.00 and a business-size SASE.

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Deadline: 25th of the month, 5 weeks before issue date.

_____ _____ _____

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JOYNER'S CORNER ANSWERS

(Puzzles on page 31)

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UATUIEC/U=JANUARY

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recipes editor, **Jenny Lloyd**

Slow Cooker Barbecue Beef

1 boneless beef sirloin tip roast (about 3 pounds), cut into large chunks
3 celery ribs, chopped
1 large onion, chopped
1 medium green pepper, chopped
1 cup ketchup
1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste
½ cup packed brown sugar
¼ cup cider vinegar
3 tablespoons chili powder
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons molasses
2 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon ground mustard
8 to 10 sandwich rolls, split

Place beef in a 5-quart slow cooker. Add the celery, onion and green pepper. In a bowl, combine the ketchup, tomato paste, brown sugar, vinegar, chili powder, lemon juice, molasses, salt, Worcestershire sauce and mustard. Pour over beef mixture. Cover and cook on low for 8-9 hours or until meat is tender.

Skim fat from cooking juices if necessary. Shred beef. Toast rolls if desired. Use a slotted spoon to serve beef on rolls.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

Taco Soup

1½ pounds ground beef
1 envelope taco seasoning
2 cans (15¼ ounces each) whole kernel corn, undrained
2 cans (15 ounces each) ranch-style or chili beans, undrained
2 cans (14½ ounces each) diced tomatoes, undrained
Crushed tortilla chips and shredded cheddar cheese
Flour tortillas, warmed

In a Dutch oven or large saucepan, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in taco seasoning, corn, beans and tomatoes. Cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until heated through, stirring occasionally. Place tortilla chips in soup bowls; ladle soup over chips. Sprinkle with cheese. Serve with warmed tortillas.

Yield: 8-10 servings (about 2 quarts).

Find more than 200 recipes and photos, and share your favorites recipes, at our Web site: www.carolinacountry.com

Peanut Butter Lover's Cake

3 eggs
1⅔ cups sugar, divided
1½ cups milk, divided
3 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened chocolate, finely chopped
½ cup shortening
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups cake flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt

PEANUT BUTTER FROSTING

2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
1½ cups peanut butter
¼ cup salted peanuts, chopped
3 milk chocolate candy bars (1.55 ounces each), broken into squares

In a saucepan, whisk 1 egg until blended. Stir in ⅔ cup sugar, ½ cup milk and chocolate. Cook and stir over medium heat until chocolate is melted and mixture just comes to a boil. Remove from the heat; cool to room temperature.

In a mixing bowl, cream shortening and remaining sugar. Add remaining eggs, one at a time, beating well after each. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with remaining milk. Add chocolate mixture; mix well.

Pour into three greased and floured 9-inch round baking pans. Bake at 325 degrees for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.

For frosting, in a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until light and fluffy. Gradually add milk and peanut butter, beating well after each addition. Spread between layers and over top and sides of cooled cake. Sprinkle with peanuts. Garnish with candy bars. Store in refrigerator.

Yield: 12-14 servings.

Recipes are by Taste of Home magazine. For a sample copy, send $2 to Taste of Home, Suite 4321, PO Box 990, Greendale WI 53129-0990. Visit the Web page at *www.tasteofhome.com*.

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